The Sketch

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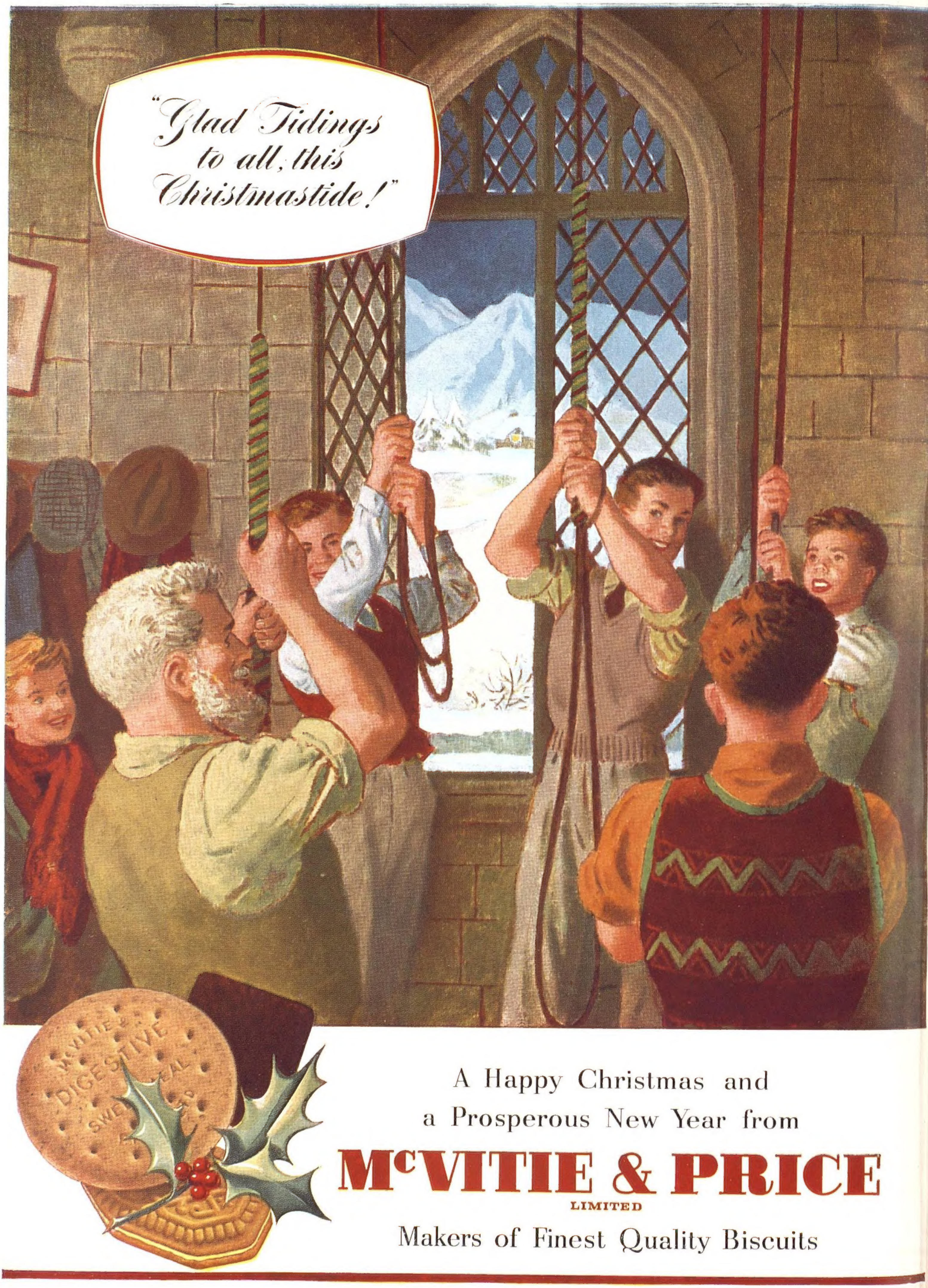
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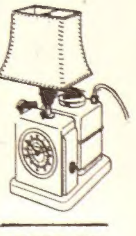

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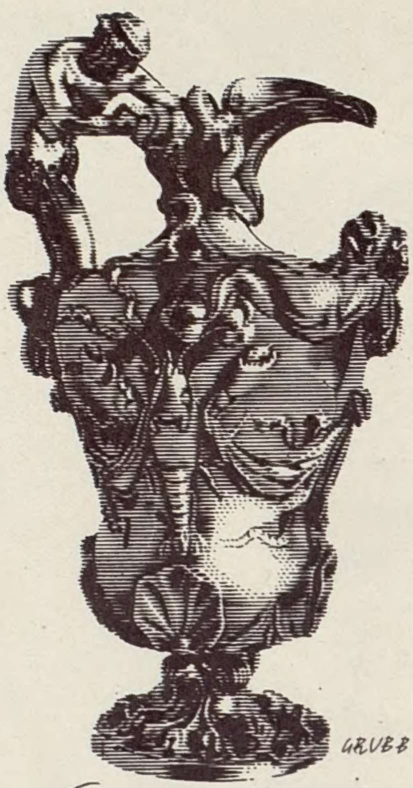

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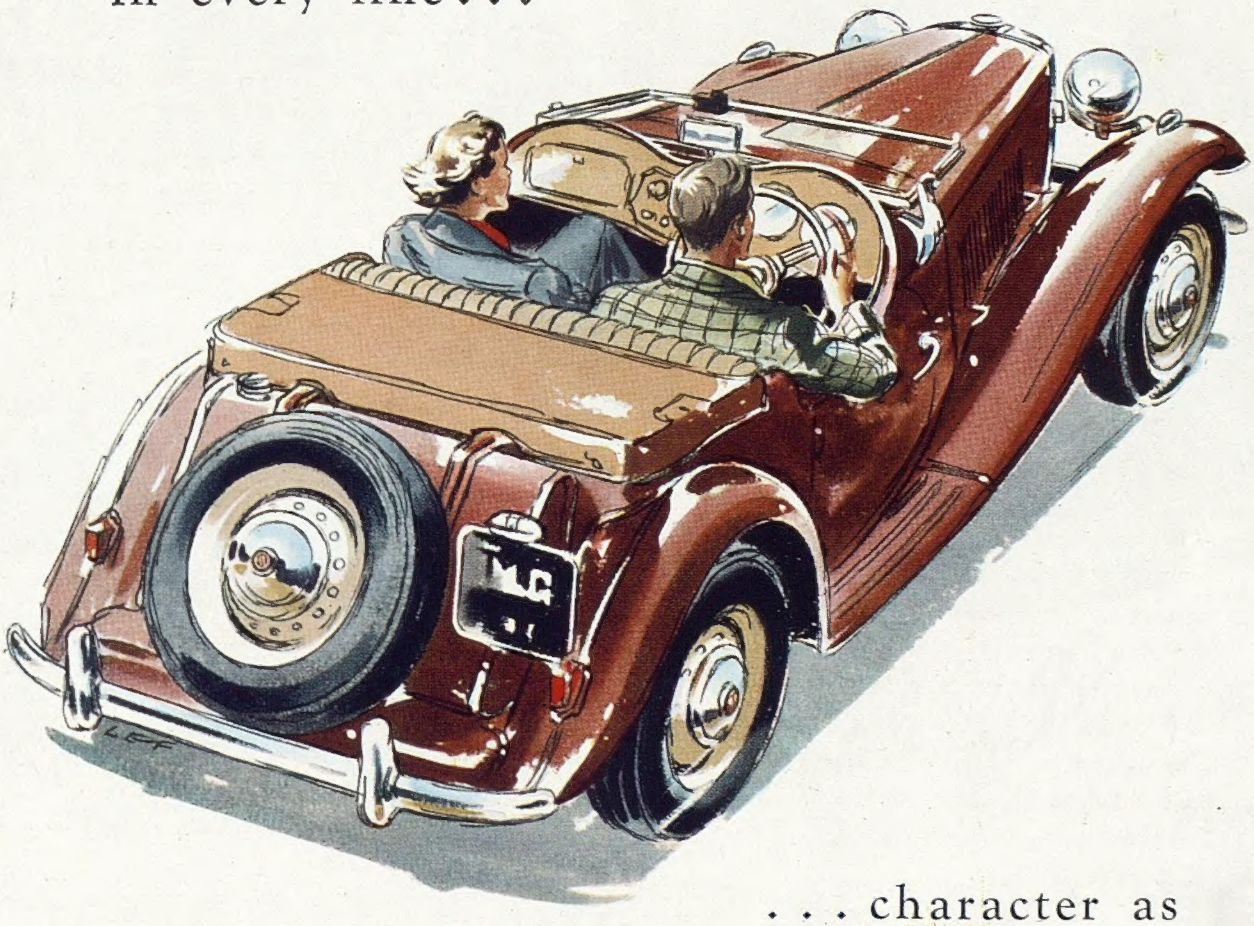

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Christmas Outlook

COLD and dark tonight? Who cares! Christmas is coming and there's magic in the air! Picture yourself a child again. Remember those thousand tiny thrills of anticipation you used to feel as each night brought the great day nearer! Will you help us to ensure that, for our great family of all ages (from under one to over ninety) this year's Christmas will live up to expectations? Do please send a gift to General Albert Orsborn, 101, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4.

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JAGUAR

HOWARD FORD & CO. LTD., LIVERPOOL AND LONDON

The Sketch
Christmas Number

We wish our readers everywhere
A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

(Victorian Christmas Card reproduced by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum)

This same branch of mistletoe instantaneously gave rise to a scene of general and delightful struggling and confusion, in the midst of which Mr. Pickwick took the old lady by the hand and led her beneath the mystic branch, while the Fat Boy took the opportunity of appropriating to his own use, and summarily devouring, a particularly fine mince-pie that had been carefully put by for somebody else.

CHRISTMAS AT DINGLEY DELL

Being a notable passage in the lives of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Winkle, Mr. Tupman, Mr. Snodgrass, Sam Weller and their friends the Wardles, adapted from the Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club.

By CHARLES DICKENS

Specially Illustrated for "The Sketch" By Cedric Chater

AS brisk as bees, if not altogether as light as fairies, did the four Pickwickians assemble on the morning of the twenty-second day of December, in the year of grace in which these, their faithfully-recorded adventures, were undertaken and accomplished. Christmas was close at hand, in all his bluff and hearty honesty; it was the season of hospitality, merriment and openheartedness; the old year was preparing, like an ancient philosopher, to call his friends around him, and amidst the sound of feasting and revelry to pass gently and calmly away. Gay and merry was the time, and gay and merry were at least four of the numerous hearts that were gladdened by its coming.

And numerous indeed are the hearts to which Christmas brings a brief season of happiness and enjoyment. How many families whose members have been dispersed and scattered far and wide in the restless struggles of life, are then reunited and meet once again in that happy state of companionship and mutual good-will which is a source of such pure and unalloyed delight. Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; that can transport the sailor and the traveller, thousands of miles away, back to his own fireside and his quiet home!

But we are so taken up and occupied with the good qualities of this saint Christmas that we are keeping Mr. Pickwick and his friends waiting in the cold on the outside of the Muggleton coach, which they have just attained, well wrapped up in great-coats, shawls and comforters. The portmanteaux and carpet-bags have been stowed away, and Mr. Weller and the guard are endeavouring to insinuate into the fore-boot a huge cod-fish several sizes too large for it—which is snugly packed up in a long brown basket with a layer of straw over the top and which has been left to the last in order that he may repose in safety on the half-dozen barrels of real native oysters, all the property of Mr. Pickwick, which have been arranged in regular order at the bottom of the receptacle. The interest displayed in Mr. Pickwick's countenance is most intense, as Mr. Weller and the guard try to squeeze the cod-fish into the boot, first head-first and then tail-first, and then top upward and then bottom upward, and then sideways and then long-ways, all of which artifices the implacable cod-fish sturdily resists, until the guard accidentally hits him in the very middle of the basket, whereupon he suddenly disappears into the boot, and with him the head and shoulders of the guard himself, who,

(*Continued on page 12*)

Mr. Pickwick, urged on by cries of encouragement from the ladies, took two or three short runs, baulked himself as often, and at last, closely attended by the faithful Sam, took another run and went slowly and gravely down the slide, with his feet about a yard-and-a-quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

CHRISTMAS AT DINGLEY DELL

(*Continued from page 10*)

MR. PICKWICK

NATHANIEL WINKLE

ARABELLA ALLEN

not calculating upon so sudden a cessation of passive resistance of the cod-fish, experiences a very unexpected shock, to the unsmotherable delight of all the porters and bystanders. Upon this, Mr. Pickwick smiles with great good humour and, drawing a shilling from his waistcoat pocket, begs the guard, as he picks himself out of the boot, to drink his health in a glass of hot brandy and water; at which the guard smiles too, and Messrs. Snodgrass, Winkle and Tupman all smile in company. The guard and Mr. Weller disappear for five minutes: most probably to get the hot brandy and water, for they smell very strongly of it when they return; the coachman mounts to the box, Mr. Weller jumps up behind, the Pickwickians pull their coats round their legs and their shawls over their noses, the helpers pull the horse-cloths off, the coachman shouts out a cheery "All right!" and away they go.

They have rumbled through the streets and jolted over the stones and at length reach the wide and open country. The wheels skim over the hard and frosty ground: and the horses, bursting into a canter at a smart crack of the whip, step along the road as if the load behind them—coach, passengers, cod-fish, oyster barrels, and all—were but a feather at their heels. They have descended a gentle slope and enter upon a level as compact and dry as a solid block of marble, two miles long. Another crack of the whip, and on they speed, at a smart gallop: the horses tossing their heads and rattling the harness as if in exhilaration at the rapidity of the motion: while the coachman, holding whip and reins in one hand, takes off his hat with the other, and resting it on his knees, pulls out his handkerchief and wipes his forehead: partly because he has a habit of doing it and partly because it 's as well to show the passengers how cool he is and what an easy thing it is to drive four-in-hand when you have had as much practice as he has. Having done this very leisurely (otherwise the effect would be materially impaired), he replaces his handkerchief, pulls on his hat, adjusts his gloves, squares his elbows, cracks the whip again and on they speed, more merrily than before.

A few small houses, scattered on either side of the road, betoken the entrance to some town or village. The lively notes of the guard's key-bugle vibrate in the clear, cold air, and wake up the old gentleman inside, who, carefully letting down the window-sash half-way and standing sentry over the air, takes a short peep out and then, carefully pulling it up again, informs the other inside that they 're going to change directly; on which the other inside wakes himself up and determines to postpone his next nap until after the stoppage. Again the bugle sounds lustily forth and rouses the cottager's wife and children, who peep out at the house-door and watch the coach till it turns the corner, when they once more crouch round the blazing fire and throw on another log of wood against father comes home; while father himself, a full mile off, has just exchanged a friendly nod with the coachman and turned round to take a good long stare at the vehicle as it whirls away.

Such was the progress of Mr. Pickwick and his friends by the Muggleton Telegraph, on their way to Dingley Dell; and at three o'clock that afternoon they all stood, high and dry, safe and sound, hale and hearty, upon the steps of the Blue Lion, having taken on the road quite enough of ale and brandy to enable them to bid defiance to the frost that was binding up the earth in its iron fetters, and weaving its beautiful network upon the trees and hedges. Mr. Pickwick was busily engaged in counting the barrels of oysters and superintending the disinterment of the cod-fish, when he felt himself gently pulled by the skirts of the coat. Looking round, he discovered that the individual who resorted to this mode of catching his attention was no other than Mr. Wardle's favourite page, better known to the readers of this unvarnished history by the distinguishing appellation of the Fat Boy.

"Aha!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Aha!" said the Fat Boy.

As he said it he glanced from the cod-fish to the oyster-barrels, and chuckled joyously. He was fatter than ever.

"Well, you look rosy enough, my young friend," said Mr. Pickwick.

"I 've been asleep, right in front of the tap-room fire," replied the Fat Boy, who had heated himself to the colour of a new chimney-pot in the course of an hour's nap. "Master sent me over with the shay-cart to carry your luggage up to the house. He 'd ha' sent some saddle-horses, but he thought you 'd rather walk, being a cold day."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Pickwick, hastily, for he remembered how they had travelled over nearly the same ground on a previous occasion. "Yes, we would rather walk. Here, Sam!"

"Sir," said Mr. Weller.

"Help Mr. Wardle's servant to put the packages into the cart, and then ride on with him. We will walk forward at once."

SAM WELLER

AUGUSTUS SNODGRASS

JOE, THE FAT BOY

Having given this direction and settled with the coachman, Mr. Pickwick and his three friends struck into the footpath across the fields and walked briskly away, leaving Mr. Weller and the Fat Boy confronted together for the first time. Sam looked at the Fat Boy with great astonishment but without saying a word, and began to stow the luggage rapidly away in the cart, while the Fat Boy stood quietly by and seemed to think it a very interesting sort of thing to see Mr. Weller working by himself.

"There," said Sam, throwing in the last carpet-bag. "There they are!"

"Yes," said the Fat Boy, in a very satisfied tone, "there they are."

"Vell, young twenty stun," said Sam, "you 're a nice specimen of a prize boy, you are!"

"Thank'ee," said the Fat Boy.

"You ain't got nothin' on your mind as makes you fret yourself, have you?" inquired Sam.

"Not as I knows on," replied the Fat Boy.

"I should rayther ha' thought, to look at you, that you was a labourin' under an unrequited attachment to some young 'ooman," said Sam.

The Fat Boy shook his head.

"Vell," said Sam, "I 'm glad to hear it. Do you ever drink anythin'?"

"I likes eating better," replied the boy.

"Ah," said Sam, "I should ha' s'posed that; but what I mean is, should you like a drop of anythin' as 'd warm you? But I s'pose you never was cold, with all them elastic fixtures, was you?"

"Sometimes," replied the boy, "and I likes a drop of something when it 's good."

"Oh, you do, do you?" said Sam. "Come this way, then!"

The Blue Lion tap was soon gained and the Fat Boy swallowed a glass of liquor without so much as winking; a feat which considerably advanced him in Mr. Weller's good opinion. Mr. Weller having transacted a similar piece of business on his own account, they got into the cart.

"Can you drive?" said the Fat Boy.

"I should rayther think so," replied Sam.

"There, then," said the Fat Boy, putting the reins in his hand and pointing up a lane; "it 's as straight as you can go; you can't miss it."

With these words the Fat Boy laid himself affectionately down by the side of the cod-fish, and placing an oyster-barrel under his head for a pillow, fell asleep instantaneously.

"Vell," said Sam, "of all the cool boys ever I set my eyes on, this here young gen'l'm'n is the coolest. Come, wake up, young dropsy!"

But as young dropsy evinced no symptoms of returning animation, Sam Weller sat himself down in front of the cart and, starting the old horse with a jerk of the rein, jogged steadily on towards Manor Farm.

Meanwhile, Mr. Pickwick and his friends having walked their blood into active circulation, proceeded cheerfully on. The paths were hard, the grass was crisp and frosty, the air had a fine, dry bracing coldness, and the rapid approach of the grey twilight (slate-coloured, is a better term in frosty weather) made them look forward with pleasant anticipation to the comforts which awaited them at their hospitable entertainer's.

It was the sort of afternoon that might induce a couple of elderly gentlemen, in a lonely field, to take off their great-coats and play at leapfrog in pure lightness of heart and gaiety; and we firmly believe that had Mr. Tupman at that moment proffered "a back," Mr. Pickwick would have accepted his offer with the utmost avidity.

However, Mr. Tupman did not volunteer any such accommodation, and the friends walked on, conversing merrily. As they turned into a lane they had to cross, the sound of many voices burst upon their ears; and before they had even had time to form a guess to whom they belonged, they walked into the very centre of the party who were expecting their arrival—in fact, which was first notified to the Pickwickians by the loud "Hurrah!" which burst from old Wardle's lips when they appeared in sight.

First there was Wardle himself, looking, if possible, more jolly than ever; then there was Bella and her faithful Trundle; and lastly, there were Emily and some eight or ten young ladies, who had all come down to the wedding which was to take place next day and who were in as happy and important a state as young ladies usually are on such momentous occasions; and they were, one and all, startling the fields and lanes, far and wide, with their frolic and laughter.

The ceremony of introduction, under such circumstances, was very soon performed, or we should rather say that the introduction was soon over without any ceremony at all. In two minutes thereafter, Mr. Pickwick was joking the young ladies who wouldn't come over the stile while he looked—or who, having pretty feet and unexceptionable ankles, preferred standing on the top rail for five minutes or so, declaring that they were too frightened to move—with as much ease and absence of reserve or constraint as if he had known them for life. It is worthy of remark, too, that Mr. Snodgrass offered Emily far more assistance than the absolute terrors of the stile (although it was full three feet high, and had only a couple of stepping-stones) would seem to require; while one black-eyed young lady in a very nice little pair of boots with fur round the top was observed to scream very loudly when Mr. Winkle offered to help her over.

All this was very snug and pleasant. And when the difficulties of the stile were at last surmounted and they once more entered on the open field, old Wardle informed Mr. Pickwick how they had all been down in a body to inspect the furniture and fittings-up of the house which the young couple were to tenant after the Christmas holidays; at which communication Bella and Trundle both coloured up, as red as the Fat Boy after the tap-room fire; and the young lady with the black eyes and the fur round the boots whispered something in Emily's ear, and then glanced archly at Mr. Snodgrass: to which Emily responded that she was a foolish girl, but turned very red, notwithstanding; and Mr. Snodgrass, who was as modest as all great geniuses usually are, felt the crimson rising to the crown of his head and devoutly wished in the inmost recesses of his own heart that the young lady aforesaid, with her black eyes and her archness, and her boots with the fur round the top, were all comfortably deposited in the adjacent county.

But if they were social and happy outside the house, what was the warmth and cordiality of their reception when they reached the farm! The very servants grinned with pleasure at sight of Mr. Pickwick; and Emma bestowed a half-demure, half-impudent and all-pretty look of recognition on Mr. Tupman, which was enough to make the statue of Bonaparte in the passage unfold his arms and clasp her within them.

The old lady was seated in customary state in the front parlour, but she was rather cross and, by consequence, most particularly deaf. She never went out herself, and like a great many other old ladies of the same stamp, she was apt to consider it an act of domestic treason if anybody else took the liberty of doing what she couldn't. So, bless her old soul, she sat as upright as she could in her great chair and looked as fierce as might be—and that was benevolent after all.

"Mother," said Wardle, "Mr. Pickwick. You recollect him?"

"Never mind," replied the old lady with great dignity. "Don't trouble Mr. Pickwick about an old creetur like me. Nobody cares about me now, and it 's very nat'ral they shouldn't." Here the old lady tossed her head and smoothed down her lavender-coloured silk dress with trembling hands.

"Come, come, ma'am," said Mr. Pickwick, "I can't let you cut an old friend in this way. I have come down expressly to have a long talk and another rubber with you; and we 'll show these boys and girls how to dance a minuet before they 're eight-and-forty hours older."

The old lady was rapidly giving way but she did not like to do it all at once, so she only said, "Ah! I can't hear him!"

"Nonsense, mother," said Wardle. "Come, come, don't be cross, there 's a good soul. Recollect Bella; come, you must keep her spirits up, poor girl."

The good old lady heard this, for her lip quivered as her son said it. But age has its little infirmities of temper, and she was not quite brought round yet. So she smoothed down the lavender-coloured dress again and, turning to Mr. Pickwick, said, "Ah, Mr. Pickwick, young people was very different when I was a girl."

"No doubt of that, ma'am," said Mr. Pickwick, "and that 's the reason why I would make much of the few that have any traces of the old stock"—and saying this, Mr. Pickwick gently pulled Bella towards him and, bestowing a kiss upon her forehead, bade her sit down on the little stool at her grandmother's feet. Whether the expression of her countenance, as it was raised towards the old lady's face, called up a thought of old times, or whether the old lady was touched by Mr. Pickwick's affectionate good nature, or whatever was the cause, she was fairly melted; so she threw herself on her granddaughter's neck and all the little ill-humour evaporated in a gush of silent tears.

A happy party they were that night. Sedate and solemn were the score of rubbers in which Mr. Pickwick and the old lady played together; uproarious was the mirth of the round table. Long after the ladies had retired did the hot elder wine, well qualified with brandy and spice, go round and round and round again; and sound was the sleep and pleasant were the dreams that followed. It is a remarkable fact that those of Mr. Snodgrass bore constant reference to Emily Wardle; and that the principal figure in Mr. Winkle's visions was a young lady with black eyes, an arch smile, and a pair of remarkably nice boots with fur round the tops.

(*Continued on page 42*)

APPROACH TO

Reproduced from an original print in the possession of Walkers Galleries, Ltd.

CHRISTMAS

Painted by J. Scherrewitz. *By Courtesy of Williams and Sons.*

WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall,
  And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
  And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipp'd and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
    Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
  And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
  And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
    Tu-who;
Tu-whit, tu-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

—" *Love's Labour's Lost.*"

BOXING DAY — WHEN GRANDMA TOOK HER BUSTLE SKATING

Reproduced from an original print in the possession of Walkers Galleries.

SO NAUGHTY, BUT EVER SO NICE!

Gold that clinked in the counting-houses during the day is likely to find its way into the slippers of the young ladies of the can-can. Mutton-chop whiskers will be spruced and pointed moustaches waxed for an evening out with the thrills and frills of these "little bits of fluff"—a nightly, ageless refresher for tired businessmen.

Why Not Try This Out-of-Date Christmas Dinner?

By Raymond Postgate

THIS Christmas I am putting it to myself, and to my wife, that we should have an out-of-date dinner. It is, after all, the period of the year when it is not simply permissible but almost obligatory to be a little out of date. The combination of good will and great eating is Victorian; there is no other century which has welded the two and made of them a religious festival.

The obvious solution—to have a "Dickensian" meal—has had to be abandoned. Firstly, it was impossible; the meals Dickens describes assume that anyone who chooses and is not utterly poverty-stricken can buy huge legs of pork, great lumps of bacon, 15-lb. sirloins, saddles of mutton (it is twenty years since I saw a saddle of mutton; I mean, real mutton, not insipid lamb) and coiled wreaths of sausages which are 90 per cent. real meat and fat.

Secondly, I don't really want to reproduce the rather gross and torpid stuffings of the middle Victorian period. I want to find what was the *best* cooking in those days, not the fattest and heaviest. And that I think I have done. If Mrs. Dickens was a wise housekeeper she would have purchased in 1852 the eighth edition of *The Cook's Oracle*, by Dr. William Kitchiner. Though it was a book of profound importance and high repute for over half a century, it has been almost completely forgotten. Even I, to my shame, had never opened it. I have only just discovered what I have missed. I have no excuse, for Professor Sir Jack Drummond and Dr. Anne Wilbraham, those two scientists of more than Gargantuan wisdom, in a reference in their book, *The Englishman's Food*, compare Dr. Kitchiner to Brillat Savarin.

The praise is a little excessive. It illuminates one reason for his later eclipse, however; when he wrote, there was approaching the later Victorian age, which had no use for Savarin-like imagination, delicacy and eccentricity in food. All that it wanted was heavier, richer and, above all, *more* food; and this food must be of the same type that it knew already. It was an epoch of vast indigestions in heavy, over-furnished dining-rooms, of prolonged, dull meals that ended in port and coma.

It may be that Kitchiner assisted in his decline by his combativity. His book is full of examples. He made no mistakes, he told his readers; he had arrived "at Culinary Certainty." His system of cross-references was criticised? The critics were "some Idle Idiots," he said in his third edition, and kept the remark in until his death. But he felt he was justified; he had cooked every one of his 200 or more recipes in his own kitchen, and submitted them to very severe tests. As for instance:

"I have not presumed to insert a single composition without previously obtaining the '*imprimatur*' of an enlightened and indefatigable *COMMITTEE OF TASTE* (composed of thorough-bred GRANDS GOURMANDS of the first magnitude), whose cordial co-operation I cannot too highly praise; and here do I most gratefully record the unremitting zeal they manifested during their arduous process of proving the respective Recipes—they were so truly philosophically and disinterestedly regardless of the wear and tear of teeth and stomach that their Labour appeared a Pleasure to them."

Some of his discoveries were not, perhaps, so helpful as he supposed. "Garlic and clove, or all-spice, combined in certain proportions, produce a flavour very similar to Assafœtida." He adds, reflectively and propitiatingly: "The Germans call it *Devil's Dung*." However, quite early on I found two flavours or sauces which I have noted down not for my actual Christmas dinner, but for the accommodation or "dressing" of what will be left over cold.

The first is called "The Spaniard's Gravy," and it was "the secret of the *old Spaniard* who kept the house of that name on Hampstead Heath"—no use to ask for it there now, I'm afraid. You slice up what cold meat you have, put it in a pan, peppered and salted, with a little sliced carrot, some sliced ham, *four* cut-up cloves of garlic and a tablespoonful of water; brown the meat, turning it on both sides; take it out if it is well-cooked (but it is preferable that it should be under-cooked and stay in); thicken with flour; add sweet herbs, two cloves, a sliced lemon and up to a quart of stock and simmer for an hour-and-a-half. Take out the solids before serving, and pour over the meat.

The second is called simply "Wow Wow Sauce"; it is for boiled or stewed-up beef and such food that has lost its taste. It is a thick sauce made of vinegar, mushroom ketchup, port, made mustard and stock, to which is added chopped parsley and pickled cucumber; it sounds certain to revive the jaded.

The next thing that I noticed was called "Soles, Eels, or Small Fish, cooked Wiggy's way." Who was Wiggy? I don't know; his name recurs continually among Dr. Kitchiner's recipes, generally associated with economical dishes of the kind I can afford. I think he was probably a friend, or at least an associate, of Mr. Winkle's; he either ran a chop-house to which Mr. Winkle resorted when money was short or else (in association with Bob Sawyer, perhaps) enforced upon landladies and others the cooking of dishes like this which were tasty as well as inexpensive. "Fillets of whiting, cooked Wiggy's way, Mrs. Bardolph!"—it sounds a probable order to be shouted down the stairs, over the banisters.

The recipe is, in addition to "soles, eels and small fish," for "fillets of turbot, whiting, brills, cod, or the head or tail of it." The fish must be skinned and fried brown, and then put into "a quart of good beef gravy" and simmered for a quarter of an hour with onions, cloves and mace. Then you lift out the fish and keep it warm, and with all or part of the stock in which it has cooked you make a sauce "about as thick as cream," with flour, and with the addition of two tablespoonsful of port (or, better, I will add, Australian or even British wine of the same character) and half that of mushroom ketchup "or Cavice" (what on earth is that?), stirring those last in by degrees, and making sure the mixture boils before you pour it over your fish. I expect you know, and if so, I apologise for telling you, that wine which has not boiled when used in cooking tastes abominably and gratingly, but once it has boiled something crude goes out of it with the alcohol and it adds a mellow richness which there is no other way of getting.

However, fish is all very well, but for Christmas what are really wanted are turkeys, beef, venison, plum puddings, mince-pies, and so on. I proceeded in search of these, and was again deflected by Dr. Kitchiner's exhortations. Like most Victorians, he was always improving the occasion, and his readers; but unlike many of his contemporaries, he was usually worth listening to. Before he would let the cook deal with a turkey she had to listen to "a chapter of friendly advice," as he called it, "as useful as it is original."

"We hope the Culinary Student" (it was artful of him to hand to her, in 1852 or earlier, that title) "who peruses these pages will be above adopting the common, mean and ever-unsuccessful way" (he knew his Victorian cooks, did Dr. Kitchiner—she must be convinced it was *beneath her station* to do this) "of currying favour with fellow-servants by flattering them and ridiculing the Mistress when in the Kitchen and then prancing into the Parlour and purring about her, and making opportunities to display all the little faults you can find (*or invent*) against those in the kitchen—assuring them, on your return, that they were *praised* for whatever you heard them *blamed*, and so excite them to run more extremely into any little error which will be displeasing to their employers, making your victims believe it all out of your *sincere regard* for them."

He was not (for I must be just to him) the sort of employer who saw things only from the other side of the green-baize doors. He spoke very straightly to people who underpaid their maids. He worked out a table which showed what girls needed, a century ago, to spend on their extra food and uniforms alone (it came to £9 8s. a year) and turned to italics to say: "*You, who think that to protect and encourage Virtue is the best preventive from Vice, reward your Female Servants liberally!*"

Mr. Postgate's Early Victorian Menus

FOR CHRISTMAS DAY:

FISH—WIGGY'S WAY

AN ALDERMAN IN CHAINS

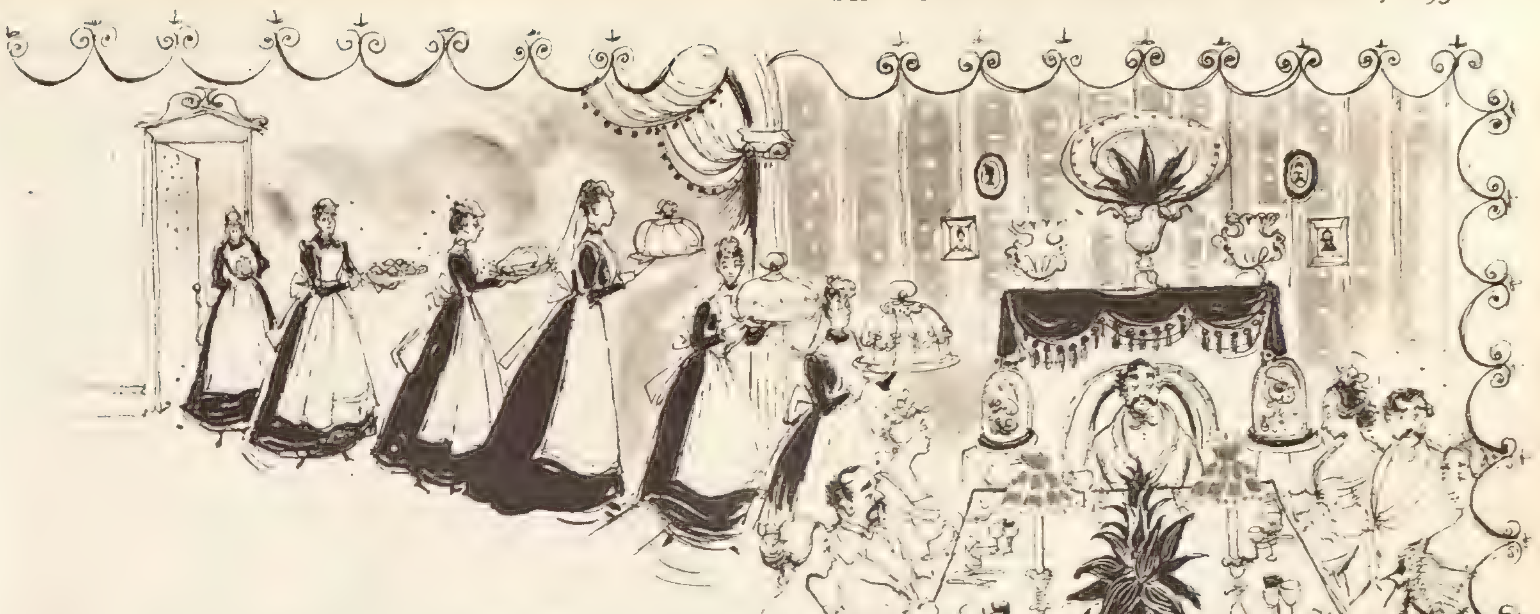
PLUM PUDDING WITH DR. KITCHINER'S TEMPERATE SAUCE

PIES WITH REAL MINCE-MEAT

FOR BOXING DAY:

POULTRY HEATED UP IN THE OLD SPANIARD'S GRAVY

COLD MEAT WITH WOW WOW SAUCE



However, this is a distraction. What shall we offer ourselves as meat for our out-of-date Christmas dinner ?

There are not many things in the 1852 menu of which we don't know. One, which tempts me, is mutton treated as venison. This is for mutton which has not much taste, and as we now almost always have immature lamb, which has only the most delicate of tastes even when it 's fresh, I am looking at it with considerable interest. Over Christmas a lot of people will be buying turkeys and geese and chickens, and so on, and there *may* be rather more " butcher's meat " available. There has been in the past. If so, then one should choose for this dish (favoured by " Persevering and Ingenious Epicures ") the neck of as full-grown an animal as one can find, and rub into it regularly, for two days before cooking, a mixture of black pepper and allspice. Then make a paste of flour and water and wrap the whole joint in that and in paper tied up with string, as if you were going to post it. Then bake it. You will find the method described in any large cooking-book under " Haunch of Venison, to Roast," or something like that. Your mutton-lamb, like venison, must be pretty ripe if you treat it this way.

As for turkeys, they were treated 100 years ago rather as we do. A roast turkey was festooned with fried sausages and called an " Alderman in Chains." The exact moment of cooking was determined by the master of the house, and he was not held to a date. " No man who understands good living will say ' On such a day I will eat that Turkey,' but will hang it up by four of the large tail feathers, and when on paying his morning visit to the Larder he finds it lying upon a cloth (prepared to receive it when it falls), that day let it be cooked."

I have registered, with some interest, however, that Dr. Kitchiner thinks very well of *boiled* turkey, skinned and served with pickled pork, bacon and greens, or pork sausages. Also (" don't pour it over, but send it up in a boat ") *liver* or *oyster* sauce, or perhaps a sauce made of eggs.

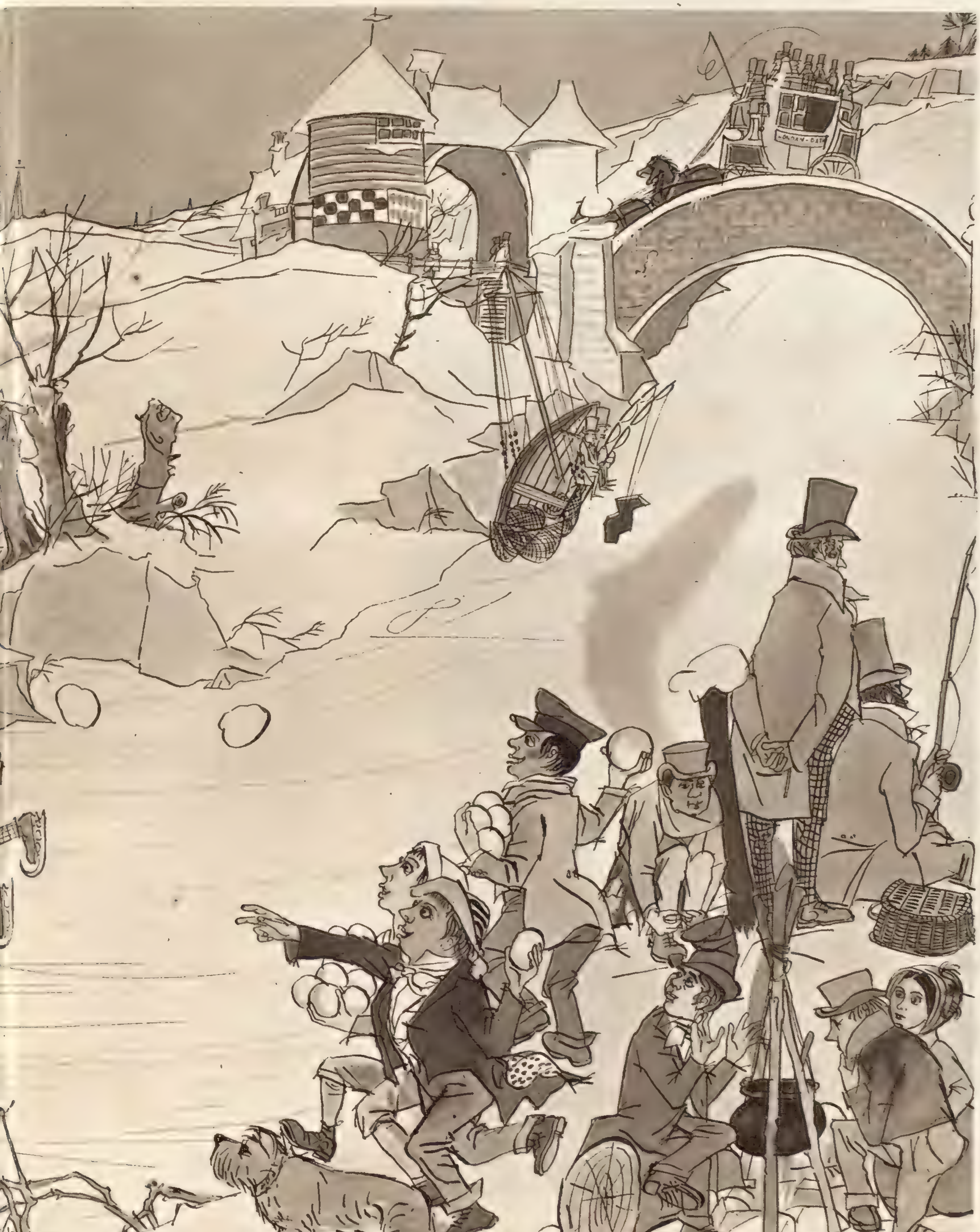
Now from this we must move on (for time and space are running out) to plum puddings and mince-pies. Plum puddings, it appears, have not changed in 100 years. I have been through a large number of recipes and there is no variation worth mentioning. The sauce to go with them, however, has changed. Even in 1852 the Victorians would not have faced our habit of making a " cream sauce " with the rum or brandy ; that was too fattening even for them. I transcribe Dr. Kitchiner's Temperate recipe : " A glass of sherry, half a glass of brandy or Cherry Bounce or curacao or essence of Punch, two teaspoonfuls of pounded lump sugar, a very little grated lemon peel, in a quarter of a pint of melted butter ; grate nutmeg on top."

But mince-pies ? They were very different. Mince-meat was mince-*meat*, and I hope to try it. Here is the authentic account of how to provide it :

" 2 lb. beef suet, 2 lb. apples, 3 lb. currants, 1 lb. raisins, 1 lb. moist sugar, ½ lb. citron [What 's that ?], 1 lb. candied orange and lemon peel, 2 lb. cooked Beef cut up, 2 grated nutmegs, 1 oz. salt, 1 oz. ground ginger, ½ oz. coriander seeds, ½ oz. allspice, ½ oz. cloves, juice and rinds of 6 lemons, ½ pint brandy, 1 pint sweet wine." You mix all these and cook in the usual way, very slowly. I am relieved to read that " the same weight of tripe may be substituted for the beef, and sometimes the yolks of Eggs boiled hard " ; that will make it easier with the butcher.

Perhaps, on second thoughts, I won't ask my wife to make all that enormous quantity to start off with. I mayn't like authentic Early Victorian mince-pies when I get them. But at least we may try it on a small scale.

DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT



TO AN OLD VIEW

Specially drawn for "THE SKETCH" by Michael ffolkes.

Tragic Casements

A Ghost Story

by

Oliver Onions

(Author of *The Beckoning Fair One* and other stories of the supernatural)

Illustrated by Anthony Brandt.

. . . she dreamt that two horrible faces were peering in at her.

I.

EUSTACE CORYDON had put up his greenhouse during the winter months, and at a cost of next to nothing. A lucky find of second-hand glass, a few flagstones, and the old sections that had been lying in the wood-shed for years, and now where the old lobby had been they had a conservatory-lounge to sit in and a look-out over the bird-haunted morfa that stretched away to the estuary and the sea.

It seemed an age since their daughter Patricia's last home-coming. As she had spent Christmas with Anne, so now she had brought Anne home with her, and they were to sleep in the garden hut up at the orchard's edge. But they had had a long and exhausting day of it, the morfa-view would keep till the morning, and the best welcome to the pair of them was to give them their supper and pack them off early to their garden beds.

Anne, four years older than Patricia, was a town-mouse. Her garden in London had iron railings round it, and if she heard stirrings after she had gone to bed they were those of the policeman on his nightly round, his light resting on locks and fastenings as he passed. But here the nearest police-station was five miles away. It had honeysuckle up its wall, through which hardly once in five years did some disturbing black word like REWARD peep, and to sleep out of doors came as naturally to Patricia as to a fledgling in its nest.

But to-night fitful summer lightning made a tremolo of the sky, and the silver half-shilling of the moon gave the newly-painted sashwork of this greenhouse that she saw for the first time a white and wakeful look. Broken up by the slight irregularities of its panes, it was a moon seen in water, all bits and pieces, that twinkled and played tictac as the half-shilling changed its position overhead. She missed the old lobby and the black water-butt that had always stood there. The hut had roller-shutters, adjustable against the wind and rain; she wanted to close them against the moon too, and though at last she slept, at some hour of that dark overlap between moonlessness and the dawn, Anne heard a quavering voice from the other bed.

" Anne, are you awake ? "

" Yes. I was watching that star."

" Stay awake and talk, Anne. I don't want to go to sleep again and I want somebody to talk to."

" Paddy ! You 've been asleep for hours ! "

" I 'd the most horrid dream. People were moving about the front of the house, and two awful men looked round the shutter at us, and one of them said we were asking for it, and the other said nobody 'd hear from the house, and to-morrow I 'm going back to my own room——"

Anne's answer was to slip into the other bed and take the tall schoolgirl into her arms. They might sleep in gardens who wished. She had been awake these two hours, and from Paddy's bed she could still see her star and think her nightly thoughts of Denzil. He was Patricia's 6-ft. soldier brother, and since last Christmas they had been engaged to be married.

Back debts of the night are quickly paid when day comes with its cheerful solvency. After breakfast the next morning the new greenhouse was inspected, its wicker chairs sat in, its view of the morfa through the field-glasses admired. By the old passage-way it communicated with the house, a step across the new crazy-path, and they were in the garden itself, and what a little pet of a house and garden they were, this pocket-sized estate of Eustace Corydon's, that twenty years before had been no more than a couple of labourer's cottages in a field ! Passing motorists slowed down involuntarily at the bend of the road that brought it into view. They did so for the sudden picture it made, with its wistaria-plumed white gable, the maroon of its prunus, its boughs heavy with damson and cherry and plum, and its apples ripening against the wooded hillside behind. Ladies from London said they wanted to cut it out and frame it and take it back with them. But Eustace Corydon sold their husbands its strawberries instead, and booked profitable mail-orders for its asparagus next year.

And now, with the fruit season upon them, these Corydons had no time for lounging in greenhouses. They were places to pass through, dressed in their oldest clothes, laden with trugs and baskets, to fill them with their ladders set against the trees, their heads not to be seen for leafage as they conversed from tree to tree. Their picnic meals were carried out to them, they spent their days out of doors, and the most constant occupant of their new conservatory chairs was *Tiger* the cat, sleeping off on some cushion his hunting debauch of the night before. Even the creeping-jinny in its overhead wire basket was removed, because it trailed in their faces every time they passed.

So for a picture of family peace at the end of the day, let the ladies from London cut that out, too, and frame it, supper over and everybody fit to be seen again, the candles in their silver sticks and the firelight on their faces, more to eke out their scanty electricity than for any need they had of its glow. If no bee droned or wasp buzzed in their new greenhouse they had all the bees and wasps they wanted during the day; if not as much as a blade of grass pushed through the cracks of their crazy-pavement, what were a few hyacinths or shirley poppies that they should miss them ? That evening Eustace Corydon had just picked up the newspaper he had had no time to look at all day. At the wireless Patricia had been dashing like a non-stop train through Europe's stations till she had been ordered to leave the knob alone, but not by her mother. She, gentle soul, must have ear-aid, and her battery was in her lap as she and Anne turned back the corners of a thick book of patterns they had had to send to London for. That gaping oblong at the farther end of the room, just beyond the range of the firelight, would need curtains before the winter came. Then suddenly Eustace Corydon was seen to lower the edge of his paper.

" Is that wireless properly turned off ? " he asked.

Anne got up to see, but no leakage came from the wireless; she returned to her patterns and Eustace Corydon resumed his reading. But a few minutes later his *Times* was lowered again.

" Has Freda gone to bed, or has she got somebody in the kitchen with her ? " he asked.

" Freda's gone to bed. I heard her go up twenty minutes ago," Patricia sulked. *She* could read a book and listen to the wireless, too.

But even Mrs. Corydon's head turned at the next. From somewhere inside the house there had come the squeaking scrape of wood on stone and a creaking as of wicker under a weight. The muffled jingling vibration that followed it resembled nothing so much as the dropping of a tray laden with crockery, and snatching a candle from the table, Eustace Corydon had disappeared by the uncurtained doorway.

He was gone some minutes, during which nobody spoke. Then he reappeared.

" Who turned *Tiger* out ? " he demanded.

" I did," and again it was Patricia.

" Has anybody been in the greenhouse since ? "

Nobody had been in the greenhouse since.

" Then who left the outer door open ? " But Patricia was on her feet, her eyes on the uncurtained passage-way, her hands at her heart.

" Father, I *know* I didn't !—I *remember* locking it. I was *careful* to lock it——"

So, seeing her agitation, her father said nothing about the rest; the basket-chair he had found overturned, and the hook from which the creeping-jinny had been removed lying on the floor, with a ball of garden raffia by its side.

II.

A WAR Department jeep with a nosey-parker antenna gave three short staccato pips. A kitbag was set down by the roadside and a tail-light disappeared as the jeep continued on its northward way.

But Anne's SOS was answered, and with last night's hearth not yet swept and the seed-pearls of the night still grey on web and twig, she was down in the garden and in his arms.

So entered young Denzil in his battle-dress with the captain's stars, Captain Corydon, of Field Security (MI 5), who asked no more of Command H.Q. than to be turned loose with his ear-phoned jeep and his mobile section of sixteen hand-picked men. And, their first embrace over, she had expected a thousand questions and was ready with her thousand answers, but not a question did he ask. He had come to see for himself; he only laughed, held her back at arm's-length, drew her close again, and the day was broadening and bird answering bird before he even said: " Well, what about a little snoop round before anybody's awake ? "

But a new lock had been fitted to the greenhouse door and a chain to arrest its opening with a warning jar. Its none too clean windows showed only a disorder of baskets inside, heaped on the wicker chairs, with his father's gumboots on the floor. In the workshop along the alley was a quantity of left-over glass, noticeable among it the lower half of a landing-light of mid-Victorian decalcomania, diapered with cut stars and surrounded by squares of gloomy crimson and deep eye-bath blue. But suddenly Anne stood still, listening, with her finger at her lips. She didn't want to be caught by Freda, creeping in by the back way with nothing on but her dressing-gown and pyjamas, and she lifted her face.

" Quickly . . . then shall I tell them you 're here ? "

But the barkings and boundings of *Ianto*, released from the chain, had already told them that.

* * * *

" Which farm was this, father ? "

He might have left the old room only yesterday, and his mother's ears needed no aid when *he* spoke from his accustomed place at the breakfast-table. Paddy, at his side, hardly took her eyes off him and his battle-dress. But his father ? He showed his years, yet his eyes had a restless, rejuvenated brightness as he described that hilltop auction where he had found his greenhouse glass. He elaborated, dwelt on details, made a regular set-piece of it with its furniture and effects carried out into the yard, and the folk of the region assembled in their nondescript vehicles to buy, and Denzil's eyes sought Anne's across the table. " Eye-wash ? " they questioned, but there was no stopping his father now.

" You see, Den, I 'd heard there might be a wind-pump going cheap. We can't depend on this stream of ours, the pump might have given us an extra volt or two, but you should have seen the thing ! As old iron I wouldn't have given half-a-crown for it ! So I was coming away again, in a pretty savage temper, when in the cowhouse I spotted this glass——"

And now it was the glass and the state he had found it in, all mired and dropped on by the birds and by some oversight not even in the catalogue——

" But I doubt if you 'd know the farm. It 's up at the back of beyond—you can see Hungerton and half the county from up there—but I was telling you about this glass. The tenant, I forget his name, had died within the month. There were a lot of old flagstones, too; it seemed Roberts had left the cataloguing to his clerk, but he was there to do the best he could for the estate; I got the lot at my own price, and I don't know what it was about that auction that made such an impression on me. I still can't get it

(*Continued overleaf.*)

TRAGIC CASEMENTS

(*Continued from previous page.*)

out of my head; a stranger's goods and chattels, not like these parts, where they know the pedigree of every chest and corner-cupboard. Even the looking-glasses on the chests-of-drawers seemed to be peering about them, wondering who their next owner was to be, so what about this for an idea? Anne's been working in the garden like a black. Nobody seemed to know anything about this fellow, and it 's quite a panorama from up there. So take the field-glasses and off you go, the pair of you, and make a day of it."

So if young Denzil could steal upon his family like a thief in the night others could do the same, and the summer weather always hatched them out like flies, the roadsters with their sacks, the vagrants who came to the door for hot water for their tea and left their chalk-marks behind, the sleepers under haystacks, and the known characters whom the public-houses would serve with one drain drink and no more. If poachers were the trouble, set trip-wires with cans that jangled. In the house black cotton could be made to tell a tale. It would do those greenhouse windows no harm to clean them, and lest it should be supposed he was watching from his sleeping-hut, make a dummy of his kitbag and watch from somewhere else.

But first the bicycles and a day of it up in the hills with Anne.

III.

A DAY of it! They had made a day-and-a-half of it; to-morrow they would both be as stiff as boards, and he had changed his mind about the dummy in the bed, for he lay there himself, scene after scene of that long day still racing through his head.

The miles between farm and farm, but at last the farm they sought, the farm where his father had found his glass, dwelling and barn in one, and little need of a decalcomania landing-window with its doorstep its only stair.

Jaffers, the name of the late tenant had been; a retired police-sergeant from Hungerton, with some idea of bulb-growing in his head; but that was as much as they could tell him, and he would have to go to Hungerton for the rest——

Hungerton through the field-glasses, pale and aerial so far away, but when you got there a county town with its traffic lights and studded crossings, its constabulary headquarters and its assize court, its public park and its county asylum, and its garden-city penitentiary where its old gaol had been.

His quick question to Anne—were her legs good for it and chance the train back? Her nodded "Yes."

And what a still night to be recalling it all, with everybody asleep and the gable below glimmering of its own whiteness and the wistaria without shadow——

It was at that moment that the light appeared in the greenhouse, and in his plimsolls he was off the bed.

But it was such a light as a night traveller sees as he scans the breathed-on windows of the train for a seat within. Dimly haloed, it was being raised, lowered, directed now into this corner, now that, and suddenly it grew dim, flickered, disappeared. He stepped back till his feet were on grass, looked up, waited. The light reappeared on the ceiling of his parents' room, was blown out, and the front of the house was in darkness again.

But now he too heard the sounds that had brought his father from his bed. Suddenly topping the hedge, the moon, a hump-backed orange with its waning, was looking at him like a punch-drunk bruiser's eye. It made a blackness of the hedge-bottom beneath it, but in the blackness something stirred. As in the whispering-gallery one steps suddenly into the unseen focus of audition, so a voice spoke and a second voice answered it.

"Tottenham Fields——" the first voice said.

"Ten miles out o' Bath——," said the second.

Then he sprang as suddenly back as if he had been catapulted.

For London had ended at Holborn when last a battered knave-of-spades hat, a mask and a horse-pistol a foot-and-a-half long had been seen in Tottenham Fields. There had been no jeeps with antennæ when that second, with his dingy wisp of necklace and the skirted coat too big for him, had taken the night air as far away as Bath. And had he truly seen them? He had felt no contact. For an instant's flicker only they had passed between him and the moon. Then only the moon was there.

But what was this that was happening in his father's garden? The scent had gone from the stocks, there was a smell of compost in the air. A fret from the morfa had drifted over it, above the level of which only the tall sunflowers reared their tarnished heads like the half-obliterated coronas of an eclipse. And how came it that half the length of the garden away he should see so much more plainly than he had seen that shadowy pair of the hedge close at hand? As through the honeysuckle of the police-station the disturbing word peeped, so the dimness of the garden was faintly populous with shapes that flitted and moved. The herbaceous border was an ambush of comings and goings, not a bush or shrub but something lurked behind it, and stare at them and they were gone. But get them into the eye-corner and they took on phantasmal substance, gait, separateness and glimpses of clothing.

Yet they were no contemporaries of one another, for the first of them to draw earthly breath must have been dead a century before the greater number were born, nor had they any air of knowing one another, but rather of making acquaintance as they met. Against the Victoria plum a garden ladder had been left, and they were making for it as if some common memory drew them, to some place they must revisit, some scene re-enact, and as they approached it now a hairtie was to be distinguished among them, now a pocket-flap, a triple cape, a buckled hat of the Regency, a peg-leg, an eye-patch, a spotted belcher. And, shelled as peas as they were, etiolated and spent, the rattling of resuscitation that rose from them was in the thieves' patter and caggermagger of centuries ago.

And now, as they grew ever more visible the nearer they drew to the ladder, there were mob-caps and mutches among them, quilted petticoats and tawdry finery, and a glimmer of light was breaking upon Denzil Corydon. They were their hussies and fancy-women, their decoys of the inns and fairs, and they had turned them off in style in those days. They had made a public holiday of it, with gingerbread and oranges and last dying speeches, and if he had been a popular desperado he had had twenty light o' loves to make his sufferings short under that ladder where in her corduroy slacks Anne had picked her fruit. But as he had fallen back from the highwaymen of the hedge, so his heart gave a bound now. From the greenhouse behind him there had come a sharp, tingling crack, and there was no mistaking the sound that followed it. It was the muffled yet forceful pressure upon a window that is being tampered with, and in his plimsolls he sprang to the crazy pavement.

One by one he knew those panes by this time, and now he was ready to take a long shot at their pedigree, too. The first of them was the flawed pane that gave their faces the mumpish look as they passed, the next the one where for economy of glass two pieces had been cut to overlap. Steamed and trickling, they had haloed his father's candle, but now for the moon, they were a reflecting outer surface only, and again it was a moon in bits and pieces, that light-soiled moon of the small hours that by the time sleeping mankind wakes is no more than a vanishing wafer in the sky. There was nothing remarkable about the third pane, but putting his hand to the fourth he drew it quickly back again. Something adhered to his fingers. It was the panel that adjoined the door, and when he advanced his hand again it passed clean through it. A quarter-circle had been cut out, the stickiness was that of the fly-paper or plaster that had muffled the blow, and through the hole the knob and chain could be reached. Stooping, he looked in.

IV

FOR all its suffocation of breathing and sweat the interior was as chill as that morgue where, behind their thin film of running water, the unidentified dead lie, each with his dreadful photograph and particulars at his head. They are the bodies dragged from the river, and the suicide no relative claims, and now he would not have swapped his glimmer of a hunch for a thousand pounds!

No geraniums in their pots, *no* basket chairs, but a prison ante-chamber, muddily moonshot, its thick air scarcely breathable for the huddled squalor that lay there on its floor!

In the garden he had felt no mortal chill. For all he knew they were still at it about their ladder under the Victoria plum, re-enacting their bygone charade with the marsh-fret for their artificial backcloth. That fellow of Tottenham Fields bade only the sunflowers stand and deliver, that swaggering beau of the Bath Road danced his minuet in feather-dustered wax, downstairs at Madame Tussaud's show.

But here was the fœtid gaol-delivery itself, and how many were they as they cursed and laughed and quarrelled and gesticulated and shivered in their fevers there? But he drew back for air. He would as soon have made an inventory of the Black Museum itself, the tiny bottles with the poison still in them, the hacked razors and flattened bullets that had done the deed, as separate these from their sessions and calendars, their circuits and sentences, their remands in custody and puttings-off till the next assize.

(*Continued on page* 52.)

. . . he raised the flower-pot to hurl it at the pane with its contorted apparition and shatter it into a thousand fragments.

THE FROZEN THAMES

Reproduced from a print in the possession of Walker's Galleries, Ltd.

Legends have multiplied about the glorious period when the Thames froze to fathomless depths, imprisoning some little old woman and her stall of wares in its glassy depths. Our print states bleakly that it is a "View of the Thames off Three Cranes Wharf when frozen Monday 31st January to Saturday 5th February 1814, on which a Fair was held, attended by many Hundred Persons." Stories of the ox roasted whole, causing scarcely a sizzle, and the gaiety of the Londoners have enchanted us ever since.

CALAMITY AT THE HARLEQUINADE. ALL IS LOST—EVEN THE SAUSAGES BY THE SLIPPERED PANTALOON

THE CONNOISSEURS By Ernest Uden.

Literature or wine? On the left, a portrait of Dr. Johnson presides over an intellectual feast, whilst the young man-about-town on the right is more concerned with the philistine pleasures of the Christmas spirit as he quizzes the glitter of gold foil on champagne and the enticing curves of a variety of other bottles.

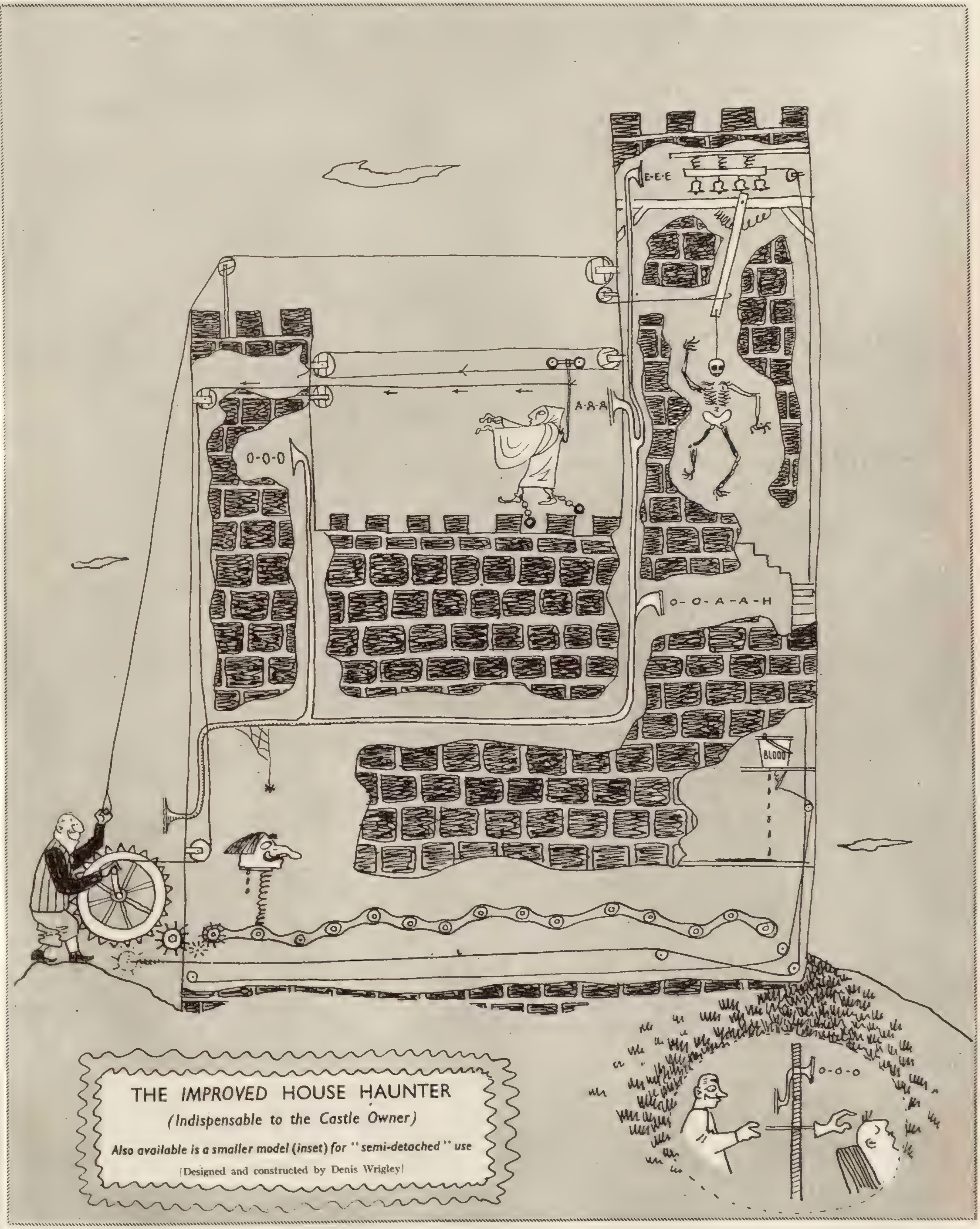
THE MELTON HUNT, GOING TO DRAW THE RAM'S HEAD COVER.
By Sir Francis Grant, P.R.A (1803-1878).

This picture, which was exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1839, was bought from the artist by the first Duke of Wellington, and is reproduced by courtesy of the present Duke. Among the 37 figures portrayed are Prince Rudolph Liechenstein, Mr. Treadwell the huntsman, the Countess of Wilton in her pony phaeton, Sir David Baird and the Hon. Mrs. Villiers. The hunting season, which opens at the beginning of November, is as exclusively English as our traditional Christmas ; both make our exacting winters not only bearable, but positively desirable.

"FATHER CHRISTMAS AND HIS LITTLE FRIENDS"

Under the above title, this set depicting the adventures of "Old Christmas" is an interesting example of the nineteenth-century Christmas Card, which by the middle 'eighties was mostly printed from a whole series of lithographic stones—a process which paved the way for the triumphs of Kate Greenaway and Randolph Caldicott. The particular series reproduced here is guilty of an anachronism in that the characters wear a pseudo-mediæval costume. In fact, the Middle Ages knew nothing of Father Christmas. That familiar figure did not appear until the nineteenth century.

Reproduced by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum



THE IMPROVED HOUSE HAUNTER

(Indispensable to the Castle Owner)

Also available is a smaller model (inset) for "semi-detached" use

[Designed and constructed by Denis Wrigley]

PRELUDE TO PANTOMIME

Victorian pantomime was something very special ; pantomime is, indeed, special to the Victorian period, as is Christmas as we know it. The slightly matriarchal fairies with their robust calves line up for their entrance ; the audience waits, hushed, for the transformation of the stage by tinsel and muslin. Admirers, old and young, attend the fairies of all ages and dispositions ; the reverse side of the tottery scenery gives little cue to the splendour of the scene about to be presented.

Reproduced from a print in the possession of Walker's Galleries, Ltd.

"Christmas shopping seems to get more and more congested every year. I can't think why."

"Sheer ostentation, I call it : just to pretend he's giving *his* family a stereoscope for Christmas, too."

Mr. Nouveau Riche : "'Ere, Lord Blank, try this. Just the stuff for Christmas, eh ? Genuine 1870 vintage !"
Lord Blank (*acidly*) : "But this *is* 1870 !"
Mr. Nouveau Riche fails to understand the point and is not one whit disconcerted !

Revelry amidst the port, plush, and plenty

Specially drawn for "THE SKETCH" by Pat Auld.

"And I *did* so want a surprise for Christmas, Edward dear."

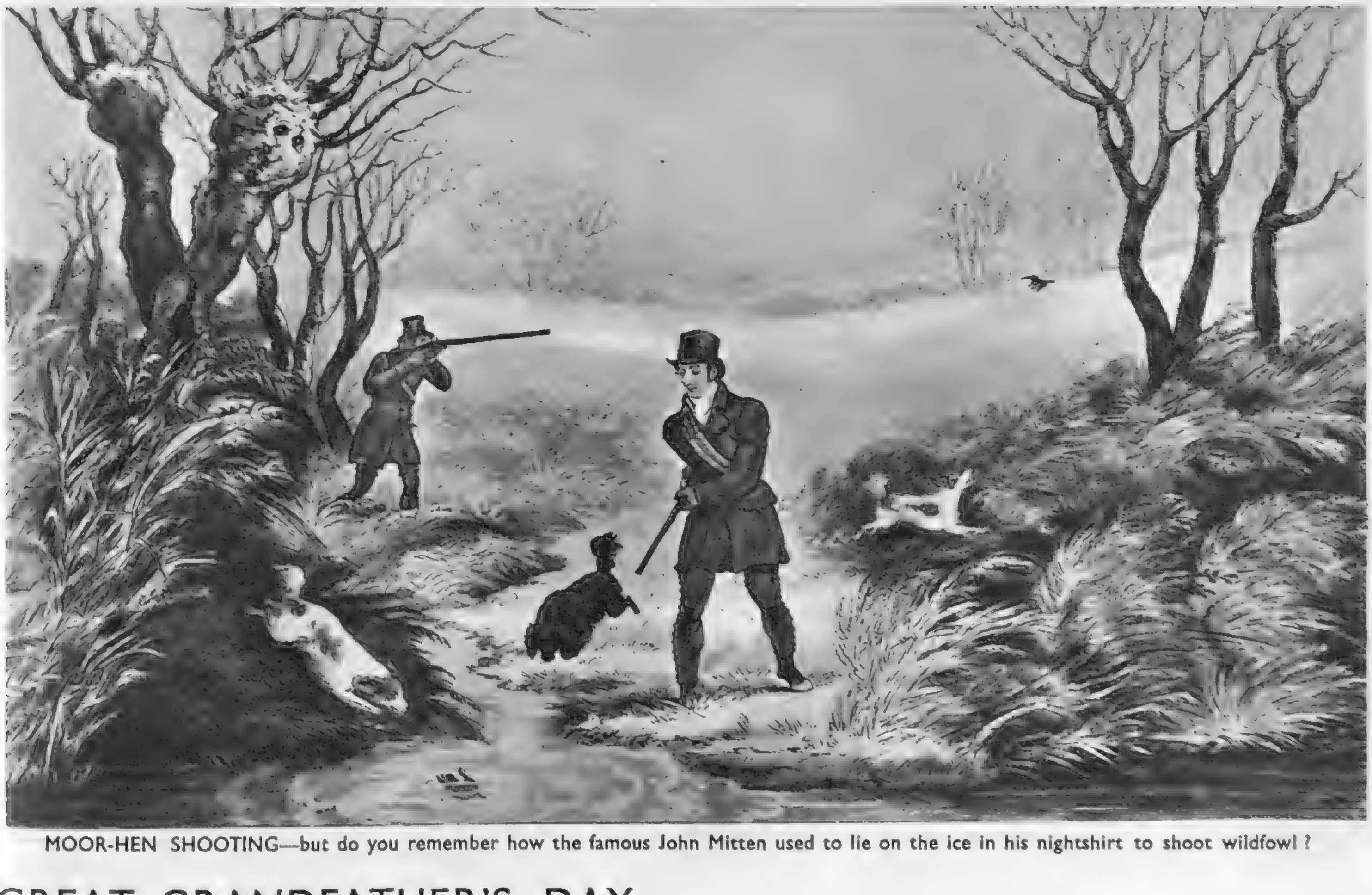
WINTER—there is ice on the village pond and green leaves are only a memory ; the gulls

COACH—nothing deters the plaguing urchins and a coachload of toffs is their favourite target of all.

WHITE CHRISTMASES OF

Reproduced from prints in the

fly inland and even the smoke from the chimneys has the appearance of frozen breath.



MOOR-HEN SHOOTING—but do you remember how the famous John Mitten used to lie on the ice in his nightshirt to shoot wildfowl ?

GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S DAY

possession of Walkers Galleries, Ltd.

CHRISTMAS AT DINGLEY DELL

(*Continued from page* 13)

MR. PICKWICK was awakened, early in the morning, by a hum of voices and a pattering of feet, sufficient to rouse even the Fat Boy from his heavy slumbers. He sat up in bed and listened. The female servants and female visitors were running constantly to and fro; and there were such multitudinous demands for hot water, such repeated outcries for needles and thread, and so many half-suppressed entreaties of "Oh, do come and tie me, there's a dear!" that Mr. Pickwick in his innocence began to imagine that something dreadful must have occurred; when he grew more awake, and remembered the wedding. The occasion being an important one, he dressed himself with peculiar care, and descended to the breakfast-room.

There were all the female servants in a brand-new uniform of pink muslin gowns, with white bows in their caps, running about the house in a state of excitement and agitation which it would be impossible to describe. The old lady was dressed out in a brocaded gown which had not seen the light for twenty years, saving and excepting such truant rays as had stolen through the chinks in the box in which it had been lain by, during the whole time. Mr. Trundle was in high feather and spirits, but a little nervous withal. The hearty old landlord was trying to look very cheerful and unconcerned but failing signally in the attempt. All the girls were in tears and white muslin, except a select two or three who were being honoured with a private view of the bride and bridesmaids upstairs. All the Pickwickians were in most blooming array; and there was a terrific roaring on the grass in front of the house, occasioned by all the men, boys and hobbledehoys attached to the farm, each of whom had got a white bow in his button-hole, and all of whom were cheering with might and main: being incited thereunto, and stimulated therein, by the precept and example of Mr. Samuel Weller, who had managed to become mighty popular already, and was as much at home as if he had been born on the land.

A wedding is a licensed subject to joke upon, but there really is no great joke in the matter, after all; we merely speak of the ceremony and beg it to be distinctly understood that we indulge in no hidden sarcasm upon a married life. Mixed up with the pleasure and joy of the occasion, are the many regrets at quitting home, the tears of parting between parent and child, the consciousness of leaving the dearest and kindest friends of the happiest portion of human life, to encounter its cares and troubles with others still untried and little known: natural feelings which we would not render this chapter mournful by describing, and which we should be still more unwilling to be supposed to ridicule.

Let us briefly say, then, that the ceremony was performed by the old clergyman in the parish church of Dingley Dell, and that Mr. Pickwick's name is attached to the register, still preserved in the vestry thereof; that the young lady with the black eyes signed her name in a very unsteady and tremulous manner; that Emily's signature, as the other bridesmaid, is nearly illegible; that it all went off in a very admirable style; that the young ladies generally thought it far less shocking than they had expected; and that, although the owner of the black eyes and the arch smile informed Mr. Winkle that she was sure she could never submit to anything so dreadful, we have the very best reasons for thinking she was mistaken. To all this, we may add that Mr. Pickwick was the first who saluted the bride, and that in so doing he threw over her neck a rich gold watch and chain which no mortal eyes but the jeweller's had ever beheld before. Then the old church bell rang as gaily as it could, and they all returned to breakfast.

"Vere does the mince-pies go, young opium-eater?" said Mr. Weller to the Fat Boy as he assisted in laying out such articles of consumption as had not been duly arranged on the previous night.

The Fat Boy pointed to the destination of the pies.

"Wery good," said Sam. "Stick a bit o' Christmas in 'em. T'other dish opposite. There; now we look compact and comfortable, as the father said ven he cut his little boy's head off to cure him o' squintin'."

As Mr. Weller made the comparison he fell back a step or two to give full effect to it, and surveyed the preparations with the utmost satisfaction.

"Wardle," said Mr. Pickwick almost as soon as they were all seated, "a glass of wine, in honour of this happy occasion!"

"I shall be delighted, my boy," said Mr. Wardle. "Joe—damn that boy—he's gone to sleep."

"No, I ain't, sir," replied the Fat Boy, starting up from a remote corner where, like the patron saint of fat boys—the immortal Horner—he had been devouring a Christmas pie: though not with the coolness and deliberation which characterised that young gentleman's proceedings.

"Fill Mr. Pickwick's glass."

"Yes, sir."

The Fat Boy filled Mr. Pickwick's glass, and then retired behind his master's chair, from whence he watched the play of the knives and forks, and the progress of the choice morsels from the dishes to the mouths of the company, with a kind of dark and gloomy joy that was most impressive.

"God bless you, old fellow!" said Mr. Pickwick.

"Same to you, my boy," replied Wardle; and they pledged each other heartily.

"Mrs. Wardle," said Mr. Pickwick, "we old folks must have a glass of wine together in honour of this joyful event."

The old lady was in a state of great grandeur just then for she was sitting at the top of the table in the brocaded gown, with her newly-married granddaughter on one side and Mr. Pickwick on the other, to do the carving. Mr. Pickwick had not spoken in a very loud tone, but she understood him at once, and drank off a full glass of wine to his long life and happiness; after which the worthy old soul launched forth into a minute and particular account of her own wedding, with a dissertation on the fashion of wearing high-heeled shoes, and some particulars concerning the life and adventures of the beautiful Lady Tollimglower, deceased: at all of which the old lady herself laughed very heartily indeed, and so did the young ladies too, for they were wondering among themselves what on earth Grandma was talking about. When they laughed, the old lady laughed ten times more heartily, and said that these always had been considered capital stories: which caused them all to laugh again and put the old lady into the very best of humours. Then the cake was cut and passed through the ring; the young ladies saved pieces to put under their pillows to dream of their future husbands on; and a great deal of blushing and merriment was thereby occasioned.

At dinner they met again, after a five-and-twenty-mile walk, undertaken by the males at Wardle's recommendation, to get rid of the effects of the wine at breakfast. The poor relations had kept in bed all day, with the view of attaining the same happy consummation, but, as they had been unsuccessful, they stopped there. Mr. Weller kept the domestics in a state of perpetual hilarity; and the Fat Boy divided his time into small alternate allotments of eating and sleeping.

The dinner was as hearty an affair as the breakfast, and was quite as noisy, without the tears. Then came the dessert and some more toasts. Then came the tea and coffee; and then the ball.

The best sitting-room at Manor Farm was a good, long, dark-panelled room with a high chimney-piece and a capacious chimney, up which you could have driven one of the new patent cabs, wheels and all. At the upper end of the room, seated in a shady bower of holly and evergreens, were the two best fiddlers and the only harp in all Muggleton. In all sorts of recesses, and on all kinds of brackets, stood massive old silver candlesticks with four branches each. The carpet was up, the candles burnt bright, the fire blazed and crackled on the hearth, and merry voices and light-hearted laughter rang through the room. If any of the old English yeomen had turned into fairies when they died, it was just the place in which they would have held their revels.

If anything could have added to the interest of this agreeable scene, it would have been the remarkable fact of Mr. Pickwick's appearing without his gaiters for the first time within the memory of his oldest friends.

"You mean to dance?" said Wardle.

"Of course I do," replied Mr. Pickwick. "Don't you see I am dressed for the purpose?" Mr. Pickwick called attention to his speckled silk stockings and smartly-tied pumps.

"*You* in silk stockings!" exclaimed Mr. Tupman jocosely.

"And why not, sir—why not?" said Mr. Pickwick, turning warmly upon him.

"Oh, of course, there is no reason why you shouldn't wear them," responded Mr. Tupman.

"I imagine not, sir, I imagine not," said Mr. Pickwick in a very peremptory tone.

Mr. Tupman had contemplated a laugh, but he found it was a serious matter; so he looked grave and said they were a pretty pattern.

"I hope they are," said Mr. Pickwick, fixing his eyes upon his friend. "You see nothing extraordinary in the stockings, *as* stockings, I trust, sir?"

"Certainly not. Oh, certainly not," replied Mr. Tupman. He walked away and Mr. Pickwick's countenance resumed its customary benign expression.

"We are all ready, I believe," said Mr. Pickwick, who was stationed with the old lady at the top of the dance, and had already made four false starts in his excessive anxiety to commence.

"Then begin at once," said Wardle. "Now!"

Up struck the two fiddles and the one harp and off went Mr. Pickwick into hands across when there was a general clapping of hands and a cry of "Stop, stop!"

(*Continued on page* 44)

REMEMBER?

(It was only in December, 1937)

CHRISTMAS AT DINGLEY DELL

(*Continued from page* 42)

"What's the matter?" said Mr. Pickwick, who was only brought to by the fiddles and harp desisting, and could have been stopped by no other earthly power if the house had been on fire.

"Where's Arabella Allen?" cried a dozen voices.

"And Winkle?" added Mr. Tupman.

"Here we are!" exclaimed that gentleman, emerging with his pretty companion from the corner; as he did so it would have been hard to tell which was the redder in the face—he or the young lady with the black eyes.

"What an extraordinary thing it is, Winkle," said Mr. Pickwick, rather pettishly, "that you couldn't have taken your place before."

"Not at all extraordinary," said Mr. Winkle.

"Well," said Mr. Pickwick with a very expressive smile as his eyes rested on Arabella, "well, I don't know that it *was* extraordinary, either, after all."

However, there was no time to think more about the matter, for the fiddles and harp began in real earnest. Away went Mr. Pickwick—hands across—down the middle to the very end of the room, and half-way up the chimney, back again to the door—poussette everywhere—loud stamp on the ground—ready for the next couple—off again—all the figure over once more—another stamp to beat out the time—next couple, and the next, and the next again—never was such going! At last, after they had reached the bottom of the dance, and full fourteen couples after the old lady had retired in an exhausted state, and the clergyman's wife had been substituted in her stead, did that gentleman, when there was no demand whatever on his exertions, keep perpetually dancing in his place to keep time to the music: smiling on his partner all the while with a blandness of demeanour which baffles all description.

Long before Mr. Pickwick was weary of dancing, the newly-married couple had retired from the scene. There was a glorious supper downstairs notwithstanding, and a good long sitting after it; and when Mr. Pickwick awoke, late the next morning, he had a confused recollection of having, severally and confidentially, invited somewhere about five-and-forty people to dine with him at the George and Vulture the very first time they came to London; which Mr. Pickwick rightly considered a pretty certain indication of his having taken something besides exercise on the previous night.

"And so your family has games in the kitchen to-night, my dear, has they?" inquired Sam of Emma.

"Yes, Mr. Weller," replied Emma; "we always have on Christmas Eve. Master wouldn't neglect to keep it up on any account."

"Your master's a wery pretty notion of keepin' anythin' up, my dear," said Mr. Weller. "I never see such a sensible sort of man as he is or such a reg'lar gen'l'm'n."

"Oh, that he is!" said the Fat Boy, joining in the conversation. "Don't he breed nice pork!" The fat youth gave a semi-cannibalistic leer at Mr. Weller as he thought of the roast legs and gravy.

"Oh, you've woke up at last, have you?" said Sam.

The Fat Boy nodded and they all three repaired to the large kitchen, in which the family were by this time assembled, according to annual custom on Christmas Eve, observed by old Wardle's forefathers from time immemorial.

From the centre of the ceiling of this kitchen old Wardle had just suspended, with his own hands, a huge branch of mistletoe, and this same branch of mistletoe instantaneously gave rise to a scene of general and delightful struggling and confusion, in the midst of which Mr. Pickwick, with a gallantry that would have done honour to a descendant of Lady Tollimglower herself, took the old lady by the hand, led her beneath the mystic branch, and saluted her in all courtesy and decorum. The old lady submitted to this piece of practical politeness with all the dignity which befitted so important and serious a solemnity, but the younger ladies, not being so thoroughly imbued with a superstitious veneration for the custom, or imagining that the value of a salute is very much enhanced if it cost a little trouble to obtain it, screamed and struggled and ran into corners and threatened and remonstrated and did everything but leave the room, until some of the less adventurous gentlemen were on the point of desisting, when they all at once found it useless to resist any longer, and submitted to be kissed with a good grace. Mr. Winkle kissed the young lady with the black eyes, and Mr. Snodgrass kissed Emily, and Mr. Weller, not being particular about the form of being under the mistletoe, kissed Emma and the other female servants just as he caught them. As to the poor relations, they kissed everybody, not even excepting the plainer portions of the young lady visitors who, in their excessive confusion, ran right under the mistletoe as soon as it was hung up without knowing it! Wardle stood with his back to the fire, surveying the whole scene, with the utmost satisfaction; and the Fat Boy took the opportunity of appropriating to his own use, and summarily devouring, a particularly fine mince-pie that had been carefully put by for somebody else.

Now the screaming had subsided and faces were in a glow, and curls in a tangle, and Mr. Pickwick, after kissing the old lady as before mentioned, was standing under the mistletoe, looking with a very pleased countenance on all that was passing around him, when the young lady with the black eyes, after a little whispering with the other young ladies, made a sudden dart forward and, putting her arm round Mr. Pickwick's neck, saluted him affectionately on the left cheek; and before Mr. Pickwick distinctly knew what was the matter, he was surrounded by the whole body and kissed by every one of them.

It was a pleasant thing to see Mr. Pickwick in the centre of the group, now pulled this way, and then that, and first kissed on the chin, and then on the nose, and then on the spectacles: and to hear the peals of laughter which were raised on every side; but it was still more pleasant a thing to see Mr. Pickwick, blinded shortly afterwards with a silk handkerchief, falling up against the wall and scrambling into corners, and going through all the mysteries of Blind Man's Buff with the utmost relish for the game, until at last he caught one of the poor relations and then had to evade the blind man himself, which he did with a nimbleness and agility that elicited the admiration and applause of all beholders. The poor relations caught the people whom they thought would like it and, when the game flagged, got caught themselves. When they were all tired of Blind Man's Buff, there was a great game at snapdragon, and when fingers enough were burned with that, and all the raisins were gone, they sat down by the huge fire of blazing logs to a substantial supper, and a mighty bowl of wassail, something smaller than an ordinary wash-house copper, in which the hot apples were hissing and bubbling with a rich look, and a jolly sound, that were perfectly irresistible.

"This," said Mr. Pickwick, looking round, "this is indeed comfort."

"Our invariable custom," replied Mr. Wardle. "Everybody sits down with us on Christmas Eve, as you see them now—servants and all; and here we wait until the clock strikes twelve, to usher Christmas in and beguile the time with forfeits and old stories. Trundle, my boy, rake up the fire."

Up flew the bright sparks in myriads as the logs were stirred. The deep red blaze sent forth a rich glow that penetrated into the furthest corner of the room and cast its cheerful tint on every face.

"WELL, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick as that favoured servitor entered his bedchamber with his warm water on the morning of Christmas Day, "still frosty?"

"Water in the wash-hand basin's a mask o' ice, sir," responded Sam.

"Severe weather, Sam," observed Mr. Pickwick.

"Fine time for them as is well wrapped up, as the Polar bear said to himself ven he was practising his skating," replied Mr. Weller.

"I shall be down in a quarter of an hour, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick, untying his nightcap.

"Wery good, sir," replied Sam. "There's a couple o' Sawbones downstairs."

"A couple of what!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, sitting up in bed.

"A couple o' Sawbones," said Sam.

"What's a Sawbones?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, not quite certain whether it was a live animal or something to eat.

"What! Don't you know what a Sawbones is, sir?" inquired Mr. Weller. "I thought everybody knows as a Sawbones was a surgeon."

"Oh, a surgeon, eh?" said Mr. Pickwick with a smile.

"Just that, sir," replied Sam. "These here ones as is below, though, ain't reg'lar thoroughbred Sawbones; they're only in trainin'."

"In other words, they're medical students, I suppose?" said Mr. Pickwick.

Sam Weller nodded assent.

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Pickwick, casting his nightcap energetically on the counterpane. "They are fine fellows, very fine fellows; with judgments matured by observation and reflection; tastes refined by reading and study. I am very glad of it."

"They're a-smokin' cigars by the kitchen fire," said Sam.

"Ah!" observed Mr. Pickwick, rubbing his hands. "Overflowing with kindly feelings and animal spirits. Just what I like to see."

"And one on 'em," said Sam, not noticing his master's interruption, "one on 'em's got his legs on the table and is a-drinkin' brandy neat, vile the t'other one—him in the barnacles—has got a barrel o' oysters a-tween his knees wich he's a-opening like steam, and as fast as he eats 'em he takes a aim vith the shells

(*Continued on page* 46)

FROM "THE SKETCH" CHRISTMAS NUMBER, 1893.
FAIRY TALE: THE THREE SNAKE LEAVES

He stooped and picked up the leaves, then, advancing towards the body, laid one on the mouth of the dead and the other on both the eyes. Hardly had he done it than the blood began to circulate in the veins and blushed softly in the pale face and lips of his dead wife. She drew a deep breath, opened her eyes, and exclaimed faintly, "Where am I?" "Thou art with me, dear wife," answered her husband; and then he told her all that had happened and how he had wakened her to life.

CHRISTMAS AT DINGLEY DELL

(*Continued from page* 44)

at young dropsy, who 's a-sittin' down fast asleep in the chimbley corner."

"Eccentricities of genius, Sam," said Mr. Pickwick. "You may retire."

Sam did retire accordingly; Mr. Pickwick, at the expiration of the quarter of an hour, went down to breakfast.

"Here he is at last!" said old Mr. Wardle. "Pickwick, this is Miss Allen's brother, Mr. Benjamin Allen. Ben we call him, and so may you if you like. This gentleman is his very particular friend, Mr.——"

"Mr. Bob Sawyer," interposed Mr. Benjamin Allen; whereupon Mr. Bob Sawyer and Mr. Benjamin Allen laughed in concert.

Mr. Pickwick bowed to Bob Sawyer and Bob Sawyer bowed to Mr. Pickwick; Bob and his very particular friend then applied themselves most assiduously to the eatables before them, and Mr. Pickwick had an opportunity of glancing at them both.

"Splendid morning, gentlemen," said Mr. Pickwick.

Mr. Bob Sawyer slightly nodded his assent to the proposition and asked Mr. Benjamin Allen for the mustard.

"Have you come far this morning, gentlemen?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Blue Lion at Muggleton," briefly responded Mr. Allen.

"You should have joined us last night," said Mr. Pickwick.

"So we should," replied Bob Sawyer, "but the brandy was too good to leave in a hurry. Wasn't it, Ben?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Benjamin Allen. "And the cigars were not bad or the pork chops, either. Were they, Bob?"

"Decidedly not," said Bob. The particular friends resumed their attack upon the breakfast more freely than before, as if the recollection of last night's supper had imparted a new relish to the meal.

"Peg away, Bob," said Mr. Allen to his companion encouragingly.

"So I do," replied Bob Sawyer. And so, to do him justice, he did.

"Nothing like dissecting to give one an appetite," said Mr. Bob Sawyer, looking round the table.

Mr. Pickwick slightly shuddered.

"By-the-bye, Bob," said Mr. Allen, "have you finished that leg yet?"

"Nearly," replied Sawyer, helping himself to half a fowl as he spoke. "It 's a very muscular one for a child's."

"Is it?" inquired Mr. Allen carelessly.

"Very," said Bob Sawyer with his mouth full.

"I 've put my name down for an arm at our place," said Mr. Allen. "We 're clubbing for a subject, and the list is nearly full, only we can't get hold of any fellow that wants a head. I wish you 'd take it."

"No," replied Bob Sawyer. "I wouldn't mind a brain, but I couldn't stand a whole head."

"Hush, hush, gentlemen, pray," said Mr. Pickwick, "I hear the ladies."

As Mr. Pickwick spoke, the ladies, gallantly escorted by Messrs. Snodgrass, Winkle and Tupman, returned from an early walk.

"Why, Ben!" said Arabella in a tone which expressed more surprise than pleasure at the sight of her brother.

"Come to take you home to-morrow," replied Benjamin.

Mr. Winkle turned pale.

"Don't you see Bob Sawyer, Arabella?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen, somewhat reproachfully. Arabella gracefully held out her hand in acknowledgment of Bob Sawyer's presence. A thrill of hatred struck to Mr. Winkle's heart as Bob Sawyer inflicted on the proffered hand a perceptible squeeze.

"Ben, dear!" said Arabella, blushing. "Have—have—you been introduced to Mr. Winkle?"

"I have not been, but I shall be very happy to be, Arabella," replied her brother gravely. Here Mr. Allen bowed grimly to Mr. Winkle, while Mr. Winkle and Mr. Bob Sawyer glanced mutual distrust out of the corners of their eyes.

The arrival of the two new visitors, and the consequent check upon Mr. Winkle and the young lady with the fur round her boots, would in all probability have proved a very unpleasant interruption to the hilarity of the party had not the cheerfulness of Mr. Pickwick and the good humour of the host been exerted to the very utmost for the common weal. Mr. Winkle gradually insinuated himself into the good graces of Mr. Benjamin Allen, and even joined in a friendly conversation with Mr. Bob Sawyer, who, enlivened with the brandy and the breakfast and the talking, gradually ripened into a state of extreme facetiousness and related with much glee an agreeable anecdote about the removal of a tumour on some gentleman's head which he illustrated by means of an oyster-knife and a half-quartern loaf, to the great edification of the assembled company. Then the whole train went to church, where Mr. Benjamin Allen fell fast asleep; while Mr. Bob Sawyer abstracted his thoughts from worldly matters by the ingenious process of carving his name on the seat of the pew in corpulent letters of four inches long.

"Now," said Wardle, after a substantial lunch, with the agreeable items of strong beer and cherry brandy, had been done ample justice to, "what say you to an hour on the ice? We shall have plenty of time."

"Capital!" said Mr. Benjamin Allen.

"Prime!" ejaculated Mr. Bob Sawyer.

"You skate, of course, Winkle?" said Wardle.

"Ye—es, oh, yes," replied Mr. Winkle. "I—I—am *rather* out of practice."

"Oh, *do* skate, Mr. Winkle," said Arabella. "I like to see it so much."

"Oh, it is *so* graceful," said another young lady.

A third young lady said it was elegant, and a fourth expressed her opinion that it was "swan-like."

"I should be very happy, I 'm sure," said Mr. Winkle, reddening, "but I have no skates."

This objection was at once overruled. Trundle had a couple of pair, and the Fat Boy announced that there were half-a-dozen more downstairs, whereat Mr. Winkle expressed exquisite delight and looked exquisitely uncomfortable.

Old Wardle led the way to a pretty large sheet of ice, and the Fat Boy and Mr. Weller, having shovelled and swept away the snow which had fallen on it during the night, Mr. Bob Sawyer adjusted his skates with a dexterity which to Mr. Winkle was perfectly marvellous and described circles with his left leg and cut figures of eight and inscribed upon the ice, without once stopping for breath, a great many other pleasant and astonishing devices, to the excessive satisfaction of Mr. Pickwick, Mr. Tupman and the ladies: which reached a pitch of positive enthusiasm when old Wardle and Benjamin Allen, assisted by the aforesaid Bob Sawyer, performed some mystic evolutions which they called a reel.

All this time, Mr. Winkle, with his face and hands blue with the cold, had been forcing a gimlet into the soles of his feet and putting his skates on with the points behind, and getting the straps into a very complicated and entangled state with the assistance of Mr. Snodgrass, who knew rather less about skates than a Hindoo. At length, however, with the assistance of Mr. Weller, the unfortunate skates were firmly screwed and buckled on, and Mr. Winkle was raised to his feet.

"Now, then, sir," said Sam, in an encouraging tone, "off vit you, and show 'em how to do it."

"Stop, Sam, stop!" said Mr. Winkle, trembling violently and clutching hold of Sam's arms with the grasp of a drowning man. "How slippery it is, Sam!"

"Not an uncommon thing upon ice, sir," replied Mr. Weller. "Hold up, sir!"

This last observation of Mr. Weller's bore reference to a demonstration Mr. Winkle made at the instant of a frantic desire to throw his feet in the air, and dash the back of his head on the ice.

"These—these—are very awkward skates, ain't they, Sam?" inquired Mr. Winkle, staggering.

"I 'm afeerd there 's a orkard gen'l'm'n in 'em, sir," replied Sam.

"Now, Winkle," cried Mr. Pickwick, quite unconscious that there was anything the matter. "Come, the ladies are all anxiety."

"Yes, yes," replied Mr. Winkle, with a ghastly smile. "I 'm coming."

"Just a-goin' to begin," said Sam, endeavouring to disengage himself. "Now, sir, start off!"

"Stop an instant, Sam!" gasped Mr. Winkle, clinging most affectionately to Mr. Weller. "I find I 've got a couple of coats at home that I don't want, Sam. You may have them, Sam."

"Thank'ee, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Never mind touching your hat, Sam," said Mr. Winkle hastily. "You needn't take your hand away to do that. I meant to have given you five shillings this morning for a Christmas-box, Sam. I 'll give it you this afternoon, Sam."

"You 're wery good, sir," replied Mr. Weller.

"Just hold me at first, Sam, will you?" said Mr. Winkle. "There—that 's right. I shall soon get in the way of it, Sam. Not too fast, Sam, not too fast."

Mr. Winkle, stooping forward with his body half-doubled up, was being assisted over the ice by Mr. Weller in a very singular and un-swan-like manner when Mr. Pickwick most innocently shouted from the opposite bank.

"Sam!"

"Sir?"

"Here. I want you."

"Let go, sir," said Sam. "Don't you hear the governor a-callin'? Let go, sir."

With a violent effort Mr. Weller disengaged himself from the grasp of the agonised Pickwickian, and, in so doing, administered

(*Continued on page* 50)

Specially drawn for "THE SKETCH" by Gus Smith.

THE CROSSING-SWEEPER, 1852

SHE: "What a curious way to sweep a crossing, Egbert."
HE: "Sheer laziness, my dove. Only half doing the job. Dangerous, too!"
(Decides not to give the wretched boy his usual halfpenny.)

SKATING ON THE SERPENTINE, 1786

Reproduced by courtesy of The London Museum.

Revelry is at its height and Mr. Rowlandson catches it at a riotous moment ; even the dogs are joining in the fun and carriages of spectators are drawn up on the Ring Road to jeer, cheer and even to take part if they can bring themselves to face the rigours of the east wind which sweeps the Park.

CHRISTMAS AT DINGLEY DELL

(*Continued from page 46*)

a considerable impetus to the unhappy Mr. Winkle. With an accuracy which no degree of dexterity of practice could have insured, that unfortunate gentleman bore swiftly down into the centre of the reel, at the very moment when Mr. Bob Sawyer was performing a flourish of unparalleled beauty. Mr. Winkle struck wildly against him, and with a loud crash they both fell heavily down. Mr. Pickwick ran to the spot. Bob Sawyer had risen to his feet but Mr. Winkle was far too wise to do anything of the kind in skates. He was seated on the ice, making spasmodic efforts to smile, but anguish was depicted on every lineament of his countenance.

"Are you hurt?" inquired Mr. Benjamin Allen with great anxiety.

"Not much," said Mr. Winkle, rubbing his back very hard.

"I wish you 'd let me bleed you," said Mr. Benjamin, with great eagerness.

"No, thank you," replied Mr. Winkle hurriedly.

"I really think you had better," said Allen.

"Thank you," replied Mr. Winkle, "I 'd rather not."

"What do *you* think, Mr. Pickwick?" inquired Bob Sawyer.

Mr. Pickwick was excited and indignant. He beckoned to Mr. Weller and said in a stern voice, "Take his skates off."

"No, but really I had scarcely begun," remonstrated Mr. Winkle.

"Take his skates off," repeated Mr. Pickwick firmly.

The command was not to be resisted. Mr. Winkle allowed Sam to obey it in silence.

"Lift him up," said Mr. Pickwick. Sam assisted him to rise.

Mr. Pickwick retired a few paces apart from the bystanders, and, beckoning his friend to approach, fixed a searching look upon him, and uttered in a low but distinct and emphatic tone, these remarkable words:

"You 're a humbug, sir."

"A what?" said Mr. Winkle, starting.

"A humbug, sir. I will speak plainer, if you wish it. An impostor, sir."

With these words, Mr. Pickwick turned slowly on his heel and rejoined his friends.

While Mr. Pickwick was delivering himself of the sentiment just recorded, Mr. Weller and the Fat Boy, having by their joint endeavours cut out a slide, were exercising themselves thereupon in a very masterly and brilliant manner. Sam Weller, in particular, was displaying that beautiful feat of fancy-sliding which is currently denominated "knocking at the cobbler's door," and which is achieved by skimming over the ice on one foot and occasionally giving a postman's knock upon it with the other. It was a good, long slide, and there was something in the motion which Mr. Pickwick, who was very cold with standing still, could not help envying.

"It looks a nice warm exercise, that, doesn't it?" he inquired of Wardle when that old gentleman was thoroughly out of breath by reason of the indefatigable manner in which he had converted his legs into a pair of compasses and drawn complicated problems on the ice.

"Ah, it does indeed," replied Wardle. "Do you slide?"

"I used to do so, on the gutters when I was a little boy," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Try it now," said Wardle.

"Oh, do, please, Mr. Pickwick!" cried all the ladies.

"I should be very happy to afford you any amusement," replied Mr. Pickwick, "but I haven't done such a thing these thirty years."

"Pooh! Pooh! Nonsense!" said Wardle, dragging off his skates with the impetuosity which characterised all his proceedings. "Here, I 'll keep you company. Come along!" And away went the good-tempered old fellow down the slide, with a rapidity which came very close upon Mr. Weller and beat the Fat Boy all to nothing.

Mr. Pickwick paused, considered, pulled off his gloves and put them in his hat: took two or three short runs, baulked himself as often, and at last took another run and went slowly and gravely down the slide, with his feet about a yard-and-a-quarter apart, amidst the gratified shouts of all the spectators.

"Keep the pot a-bilin', sir!" said Sam, and down went Wardle again, and then Mr. Pickwick and then Sam, and then Mr. Winkle, and then Mr. Bob Sawyer, and then the Fat Boy, and then Mr. Snodgrass, following closely upon each other's heels and running after each other with as much eagerness as if all their future prospects in life depended on their expedition.

It was the most intensely interesting thing to observe the manner in which Mr. Pickwick performed his share in the ceremony; to watch the torture of anxiety with which he viewed the person behind, gaining upon him at the imminent hazard of tripping him up; to see him gradually expend the painful force he had put on at first, and turn slowly round on the slide with his face towards the point from which he had started; to contemplate the playful smile which mantled on his face when he had accomplished the distance, and the eagerness with which he turned round when he had done so and ran after his predecessor: his black gaiters tripping pleasantly through the snow, and his eyes beaming cheerfulness and gladness through his spectacles. And when he was knocked down (which happened upon the average every third round), it was the most invigorating sight that can possibly be imagined to behold him gather up his hat, gloves and handkerchief with a glowing countenance and resume his station in the rank with an ardour and enthusiasm that nothing could abate.

The sport was at its height, the sliding was at the quickest, the laughter was at the loudest, when a sharp, smart crack was heard. There was a quick rush towards the bank, a wild scream from the ladies, and a shout from Mr. Tupman. A large mass of ice disappeared; the water bubbled over it; Mr. Pickwick's hat, gloves and handkerchief were floating on the surface; and this was all of Mr. Pickwick that anybody could see.

Dismay and anguish were depicted on every countenance, the males turned pale and the females fainted, Mr. Snodgrass and Mr. Winkle grasped each other by the hand and gazed at the spot where their leader had gone down with frenzied eagerness: while Mr. Tupman, by way of rendering the promptest assistance and at the same time conveying to any persons who might be within hearing the clearest possible notion of the catastrophe, ran off across the country at his utmost speed, screaming "Fire!" with all his might.

It was at this moment, when old Wardle and Sam Weller were approaching the hole with cautious steps, and Mr. Benjamin Allen was holding a hurried consultation with Mr. Bob Sawyer on the advisability of bleeding the company generally as an improving little bit of professional practice—it was at this very moment that a face, head and shoulders emerged from beneath the water and disclosed the features and spectacles of Mr. Pickwick.

"Keep yourself up for an instant—for only one instant!" bawled Mr. Snodgrass.

"Yes, do! Let me implore you—for my sake!" roared Mr. Winkle, deeply affected. The adjuration was rather unnecessary; the probability being that if Mr. Pickwick had declined to keep himself up for anybody else's sake, it would have occurred to him that he might as well do so for his own.

"Do you feel the bottom there, old fellow?" said Wardle.

"Yes, certainly," replied Mr. Pickwick, wringing the water from his head and face and gasping for breath. "I fell upon my back. I couldn't get on my feet at first."

The clay upon so much of Mr. Pickwick's coat as was yet visible bore testimony to the accuracy of this statement, and as the fears of the spectators were still further relieved by the Fat Boy's suddenly recollecting that the water was nowhere more than five feet deep, prodigies of valour were performed to get him out. After a vast quantity of splashing and cracking and struggling, Mr. Pickwick was at length fairly extricated from his unpleasant position and once more stood on dry land.

"Oh, he 'll catch his death of cold!" said Emily.

"Dear old thing!" said Arabella. "Let me wrap this shawl round you, Mr. Pickwick."

"Ah, that 's the best thing you can do," said Wardle, "and when you 've got it on, run home as fast as your legs can carry you, and jump into bed directly."

A dozen shawls were offered on the instant. Three or four of the thickest having been selected, Mr. Pickwick was wrapped up and started off, under the guidance of Mr. Weller: presenting the singular phenomenon of an elderly gentleman, dripping wet, and without a hat, with his arms bound down to his sides, skimming over the ground without any clearly-defined purpose at the rate of six good English miles an hour.

But Mr. Pickwick cared not for appearances in such an extreme case, and urged on by Sam Weller, he kept at the very top of his speed until he reached the door of Manor Farm, where Mr. Tupman had arrived some five minutes before and had frightened the old lady into palpitations of the heart by impressing her with the unalterable conviction that the kitchen chimney was on fire—a calamity which always presented itself in glowing colours to the old lady's mind when anybody about her evinced the smallest agitation.

Mr. Pickwick paused not an instant until he was snug in bed. Sam Weller lighted a blazing fire in the room and took up his dinner; a bowl of punch was carried up afterwards and a grand carouse held in honour of his safety. Old Wardle would not hear of his rising, so they made the bed the chair and Mr. Pickwick presided. A second and a third bowl were ordered in, and when Mr. Pickwick awoke next morning there was not a symptom of rheumatism about him: which proves, as Mr. Bob Sawyer very justly observed, that there is nothing like hot punch in such cases; and that if ever hot punch did fail to act as a preventive, it was merely because the patient fell into the vulgar error of not taking enough of it.

THE END.

SILENT NIGHT and THE PEACEFUL FAMILY

Left:
WINTER'S EVE
By
George Morland

Below:
FINDING THE RING
By
G. B. O'Neill
Exhibited at
Royal Academy, 1881

By Courtesy of Williams and Sons.

By Courtesy of the Cooling Galleries.

Copyright: Thos. Forman and Sons Ltd., Nottingham. By Courtesy of G. M. Lotinga, Ltd.

CHRISTMAS EVE: From the painting by F. M. Bennett.

TRAGIC CASEMENTS

(*Continued from page* 26.)

Yet he was not old enough to remember that old gaol at Hungerton, where now the garden-city penitentiary stood. He had only heard of its grim exercise-yard, with the rusty *chevaux-de-frises*, and now out of the sordid anonymity individual faces were beginning to emerge, black-list faces, with family likenesses and rememberable names. A bare century had passed since the oldest in crime of these had picked 'em up on Hungerton's rumbling treadmill in his dingy yellow with the broad-arrows, and now he too heard what Anne had heard before Patricia, his father before himself——

Tramp-tramp-tramp of feet on stone, shuffle-shuffle-shuffle along Hungerton's grey corridors, with faces turned to the wall as the Governor passed——

Rubbings and fumblings on sash and glass, glass that still kept the associations and echoes of it, glass that no scouring would cleanse——

Glass from a whole county's areas and sculleries and half-floors and inside privies, decalcomania windows opened by sluts of skivvies and the undersized lad popped in——

But now he himself had been seen at the quarter-circle with the moonlight on his face, and there was a surge and a pressing forward, and the palms of house-breakers and enterers smeared away the steaming as at every pane there appeared a face——

And somewhere among them, at large in the house, was a rogue of to-day, to be taken with the sticky stuff still on his fingers——

Putting his hand through the hole, he slid back the knob of the door.

But into what chaos and hurly-burly of atmospherics had he stepped? He was in his jeep again, his antenna useless, jammed in a cacophony of interference. He was driving in fog by night again, behind lights that showed the motes and particles of the opacity only. A focus of audition, this?

But an extraordinary thing was happening. Slowly the whole perimeter seemed to be revolving upon itself, the focus seeking *him* out, tuning itself into *his* ear, *his* intelligence, and suddenly like a belch the harsh colloquy broke through.

" It was Flattie Jaffers pinched me, but wait till *my* feet hit the flagstones again ! "

" They ain't got no right to put a man on solitary in *that* cell," and an old lag's jeering laugh.

" It 's only Sammy Smithers, and who takes any notice of Sammy? *I* seen 'im 'ang hisself twice in 'sixteen ! "

" He ain't going to hang hisself when *I 'm* doing solo there. . . . *Hi, grab him, don't let him get on that chair*——"

But there was the scraping of a garden-chair on stone, a jarring of frame work, a concussion like the dropping of a heavily-laden tray. Something hurtled past Denzil Corydon as the pane with the hole in it was shivered into a thousand fragments. At the leaping flash of his three-cell torch the prison had gone, and only for a moment had there lingered in the air a pendant shape with neck awry, in a prisoner's parti-coloured boiler-suit, hideously convulsed. Now he had eyes only for his father, standing in the inner doorway with a second flower-pot poised ready to hurl, the overturned chair, and the Woolworth hook and skein of garden raffia on the floor.

At noon of the following day they telephoned from the honeysuckled police-station that they had their roadster safely under lock and key. Judging it best to beat it while the going was good, the elusive one whose comings and goings had been cloaked by the flurry of ghostly gaolbirds had hurriedly let himself out by the front door again, only to walk into the constable's waiting arms. But at five o'clock the telephone had rung again. In taking a cup of tea into the station's single cell the constable's tender-hearted wife had closed its door with her foot only. So the miscreant had soaked his sticky fingers in it, drunk what remained, and by the time she had returned for the empty cup had been once more at large. At any rate, that was the tale they were giving out, and unless he had thumbed a lift they were bound to get him again within a milestone or two.

But about the rest they are freely communicative. It is the police practice, they say, to remove the exhibit intact, pane, fingerprints and all. They remembered Jaffers, and saw no reason at all why a retiring member of the force with a fancy for bulb-farming should not pick up a job lot of done-with old glass as well at a prison demolition as anywhere else. But Eustace Corydon's white gable has no greenhouse to-day. It lies in five fathoms of water, a mile to seaward of the bar. Motorists still slow down to exclaim at the beauty of his garden. But let any lady from London speak of cutting anything out and framing it, and she is listened to in polite silence. THE END.

Can you see what isn't there

While you are looking critically at a room as it is

(paint that you've tired of, shall we say,

wilting upholstery, fading walls)

can you picture it as it might be?

All in one dazzling flash of inspiration?

Excellent. You have insight. But (unless you have second sight)

even you cannot foresee all *the possibilities.*

How could anyone realise (unless they had just come

from Berners Street) what Sanderson

have combed Europe to discover . . . the deep

and noble fire of a certain Milanese damask,

the morning freshness of the Ewers Stockholm prints?

the aptness of their counterparts

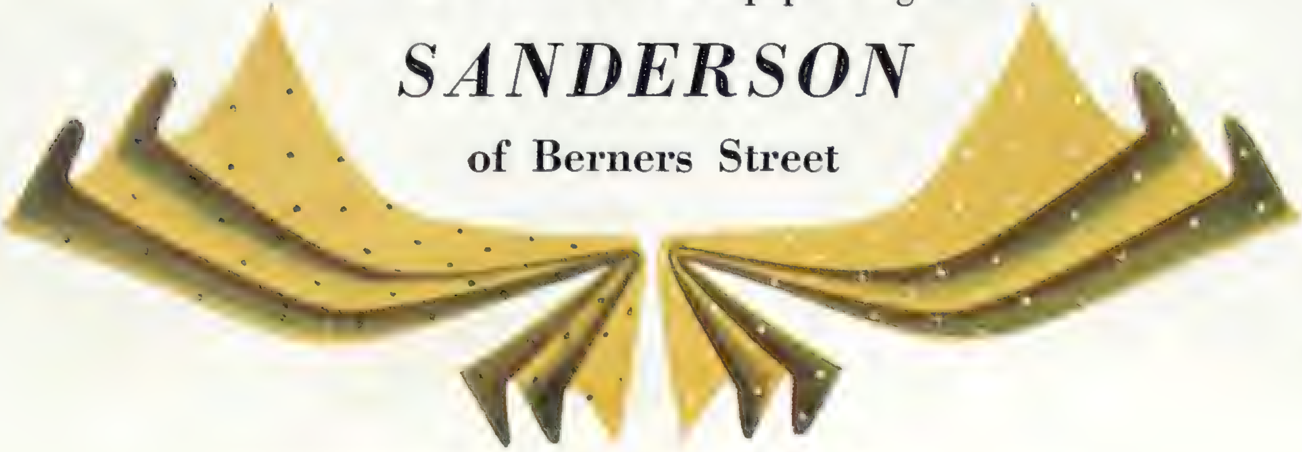
from British looms . . . as they appear

against this *and* that *Sanderson paper?*

You choose Fabrics and Wallpapers together at

SANDERSON

of Berners Street



52-53 BERNERS STREET, LONDON, W.1 and 6-7 NEWTON TERRACE, GLASGOW, C.3.

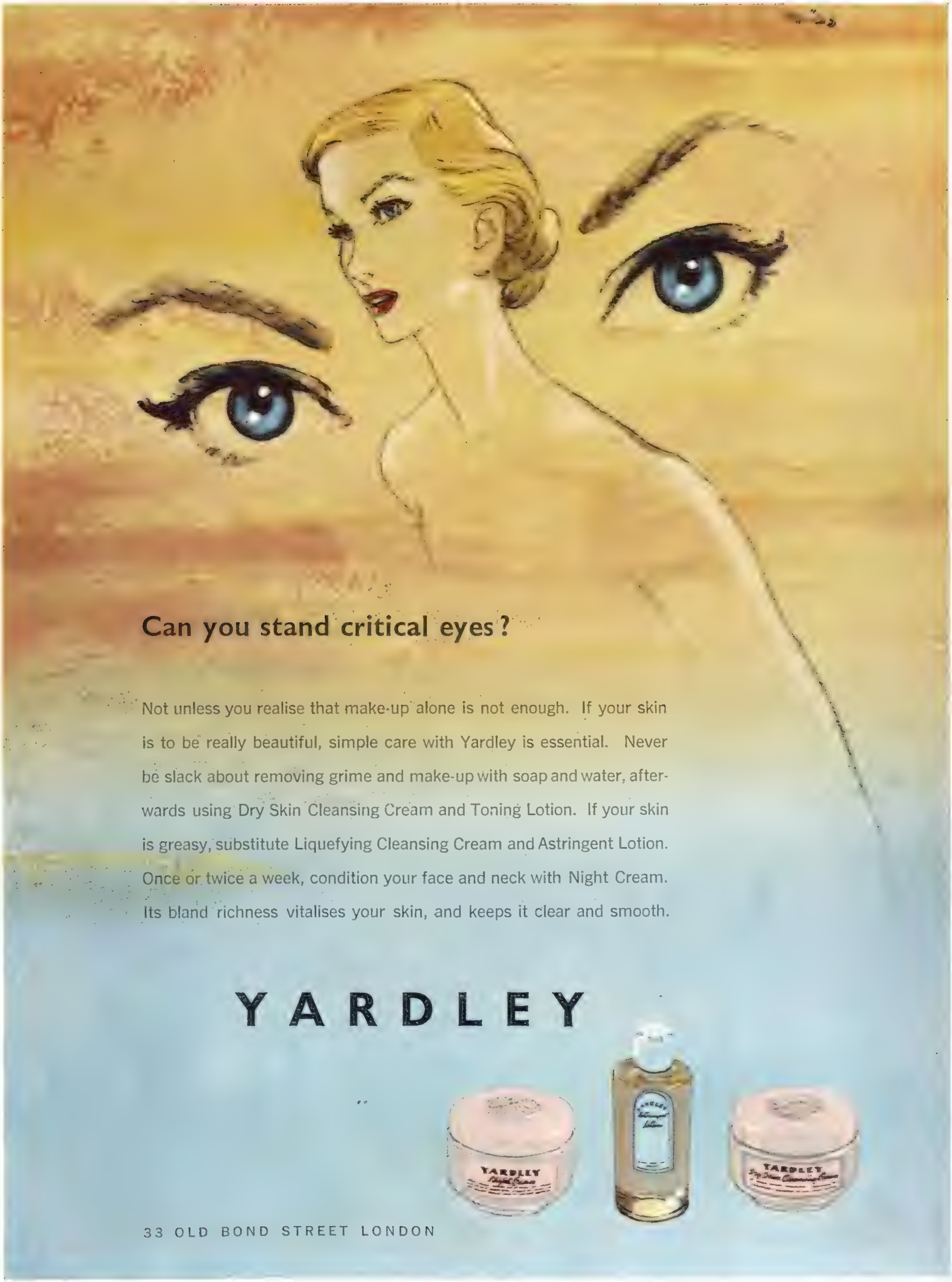
A VILLAGE SCENE WITH FALLING SNOW . . .

Reproduced by kind permission of Sir Bruce S. Ingram, O.B.E., M.C.

. . . was painted by Jodocus de Momper about 400 years ago and represents the conditions considered ideal for the great Christian and family festival of the year. Horror prevails without ; the landscape is obscured by snow ; there is slush underfoot and the inhabitants of homes and byres can only look forward to the indoor pleasures of the season : Yule logs, oxen roasted whole, pints of brandy and pounds of sugar in the pudding.

TRANSFORMATION SCENE

The pumpkin has become an elegantly curving carriage and the mice have sprung to the stature of fine white horses; Cinderella's rags have burgeoned into the grand get-up of a fashionable Victorian lady; benign fairies give their blessing and Cinderella is off once again to the ball, as in all the years before. Pantomime is long-established as an essential part of Christmas—the characters, their roots in folk-lore, never change. Our picture, the cover of a Victorian music sheet, is reproduced by courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.


Can you stand critical eyes?
Not unless you realise that make-up alone is not enough. If your skin is to be really beautiful, simple care with Yardley is essential. Never be slack about removing grime and make-up with soap and water, afterwards using Dry Skin Cleansing Cream and Toning Lotion. If your skin is greasy, substitute Liquefying Cleansing Cream and Astringent Lotion. Once or twice a week, condition your face and neck with Night Cream. Its bland richness vitalises your skin, and keeps it clear and smooth.
YARDLEY
33 OLD BOND STREET LONDON

All that's best in Britain . . .

The evening practice is nearly over . . . . . . to-morrow is Christmas Day and once again the bells will peal out their age-old message of Peace, of Goodwill and of Faith renewed . . . . The bellringers slowly walk home and as each parts with a cheerful 'Merry Christmas!' he senses the deep peace pervading this frosty, starlit night . . . . the same peace which we of the Standard Motor Company wish all owners and prospective owners of our products in the year to come.

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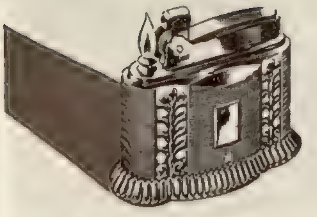
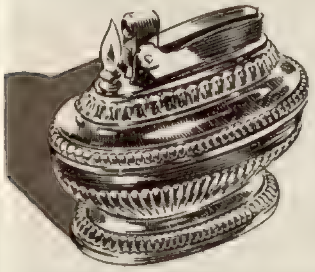


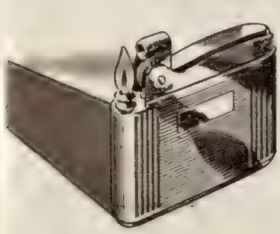
Husband gives wife gives husband

A pair of guns in an autumn syndicate? A grey mink in a strongroom safe? Or chocolates in a fit of extravagance? A Ronson Diana table lighter in a Christmas mood costs less (73/6) and makes a charming husband oblique wife gift.



For lovers of the old and contemporary

A Regency rake? Frivolous! A Hepplewhite house warmer? Fustian! A Chinese torchère? Fearsome! A Queen Anne table lighter by Ronson? Realistic! **4 guineas** and enchantingly finished in silver plate.

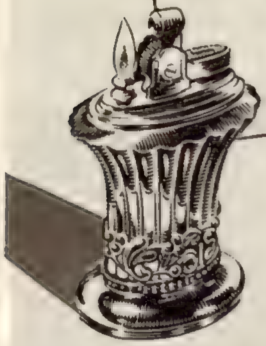


For a lady who smokes

Fire bucket? Nylon hose? We're alight with ideas! So let's be sensible . . . this Ronson Adonis, is as elegant as a platinum watch. For a lady, it's Bond Street. For a gentleman, it's Ritz-Savoy. From **50/-**.

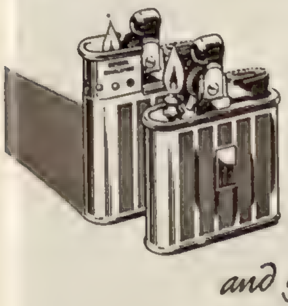
16 IDEAS FOR GIFTS

some a little lighter hearted than others



Idée élégante For the lover of lovely things, the Ronson Newport table lighter, is a collector's resistance piece. You might well resist it if it were more expensive, but at **73/6** it puts Red Anchor Chelsea and the Staffordshire dog right on the china shelf.

Crowning glory Something baroque and beautiful? Rococo and rememberable? What shall it be? A Viennese cupid? A Venetian grey mirror? Or a table lighter with those sumptuous yet subtle lines? The Ronson Crown, for example. At **4 guineas.**



For form studiers . . . or spinnaker haulers or scientists in wind tunnels, this frankly masculine and devant Ronson Whirlwind, featuring a little magic gadget which slides up for wind protection. Like all Ronsons (this one **50/-**) the Whirlwind lights first time, every time.

and get remembered for

GIVE A RONSON

WORLD'S GREATEST LIGHTER

Imitations? Yes, there are some. But you really can't mistake the Ronson quality

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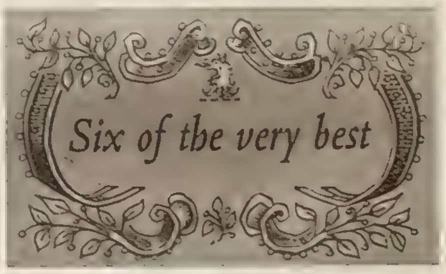
Barker & Dobson

CAMEO CHOCOLATES
REGAL FRUIT DROPS

MAKERS OF FINER CHOCOLATES AND CONFECTIONERY SINCE 1834



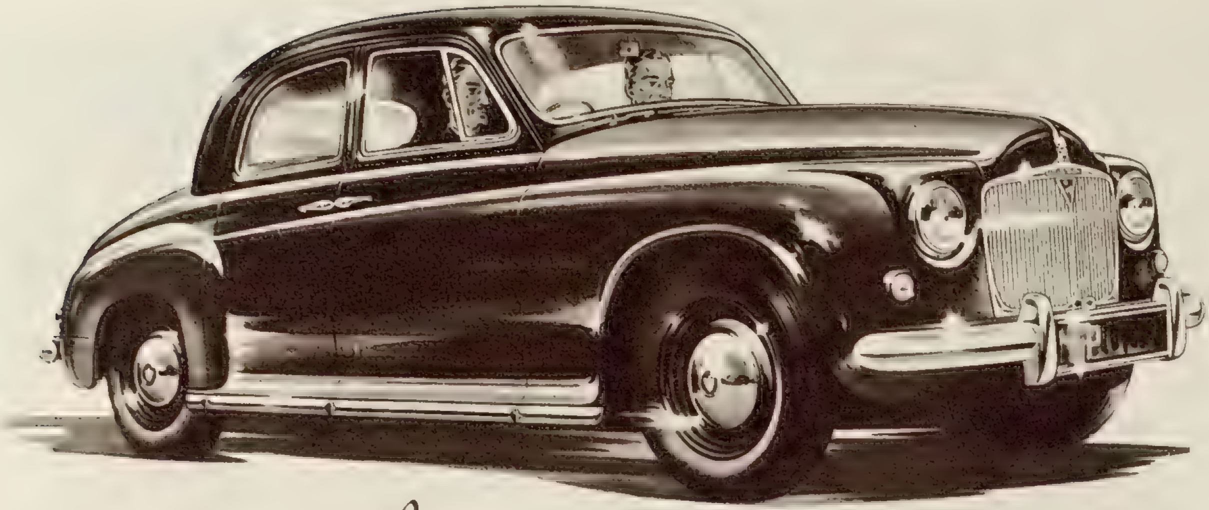
Chaplins is a name to conjure with in the wine trade—and has been for nigh on ninety years. Connoisseurs of sherry, whether their taste be for light or dark, say Chaplins and there's an end to it. Chaplins it has to be. Here are six of the very best to suit all good tastes.

CHAPLINS *fine sherries*

CELESTA a delicate pale dry Fino
MARINA a rare Manzanilla
St TERESA distinctive Amontillado
PLAZA an old golden Oloroso
TOM BOWLING rich brown Oloroso
TARANTELA traditional dark sherry

and Concord ports

W. H. Chaplin & Co. Ltd, Tower Hill, London, EC3



By Appointment
to the late King George VI
Manufacturers of
Land-Rovers
The Rover Co. Ltd.

IN THESE DAYS when so many things have to be completed with inadequate materials — or in a hurry — it is extremely satisfying to study the Rover car. Here is tangible evidence of an attention to detail and preoccupation with finish that one might have expected to find in a more leisurely age than ours. Precision in design, craftsmanship in construction and smoothness in performance are the qualities to which the Rover car owes its good reputation.

The ROVER *Seventy Five*

MADE BY THE ROVER COMPANY LIMITED, SOLIHULL, BIRMINGHAM ALSO DEVONSHIRE HOUSE, LONDON

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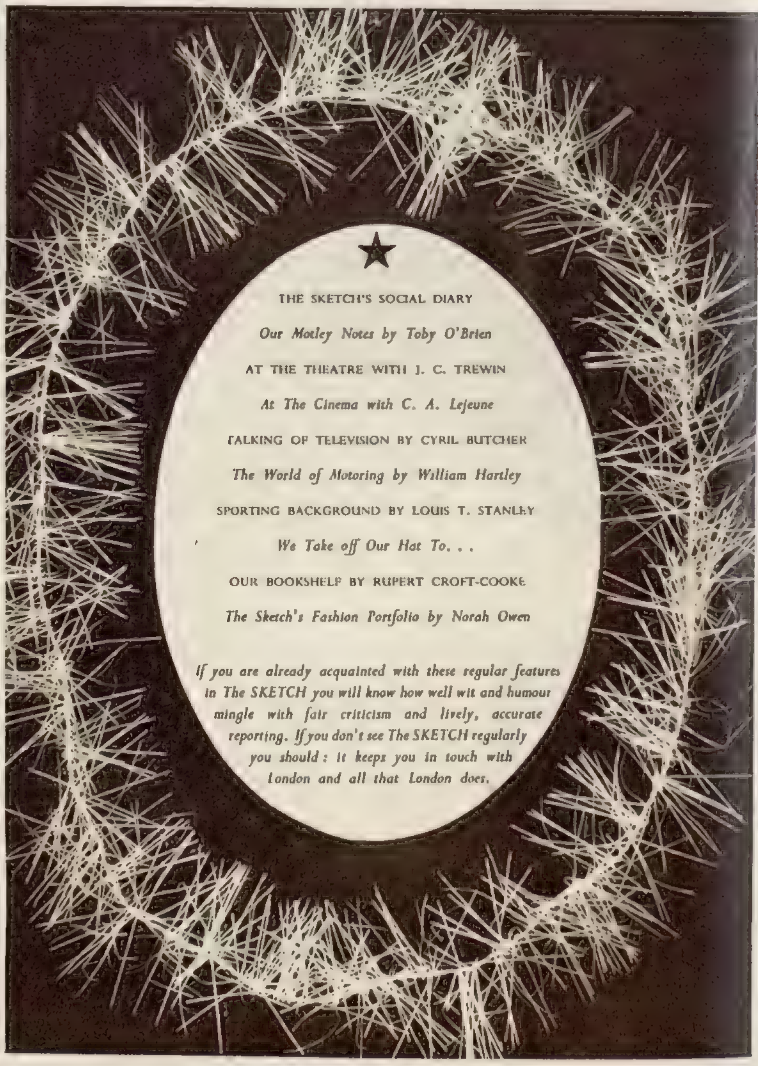

'Clydella' Comfort . . . for the Household Cavalry!

A CAVALRY CHARGE from the bedroom, mountaineering and tobogganing on the stairs . . . heroic activities like these may play havoc in the house, *but they won't hurt Clydella Pyjamas.*

There's a wonderful sense of wellbeing in wearing 'Clydella' . . . shirts, as well as pyjamas . . . soft, warm texture that nothing changes, sure protection against chills at any time of the year—and in *your* style and colour.

Fathers and sons, even unbending elder brothers, respond to 'Clydella' Comfort. Mother makes sure of it for the whole family . . . *from the day they're born.* She knows 'Clydella' garments are the best, most lasting value the shops can offer; and they have the *best possible* washing guarantee, IF IT SHRINKS WE REPLACE.

You will be glad you bought Clydella when the cold nights set in. Clydella pyjamas are wonderful economy—for Small Sons (sizes 22–36 ins.) from 31/6d.; for Fathers and Elder Brothers (sizes 38–44 ins. chest) at 59/6d.

There's nothing to equal

'Clydella'

IF IT SHRINKS WE REPLACE

MADE BY THE MAKERS OF 'VIYELLA' AND 'DAYELLA'
WILLIAM HOLLINS & COMPANY LIMITED, NOTTINGHAM

HUNTLEY & PALMERS
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Best for all occasions

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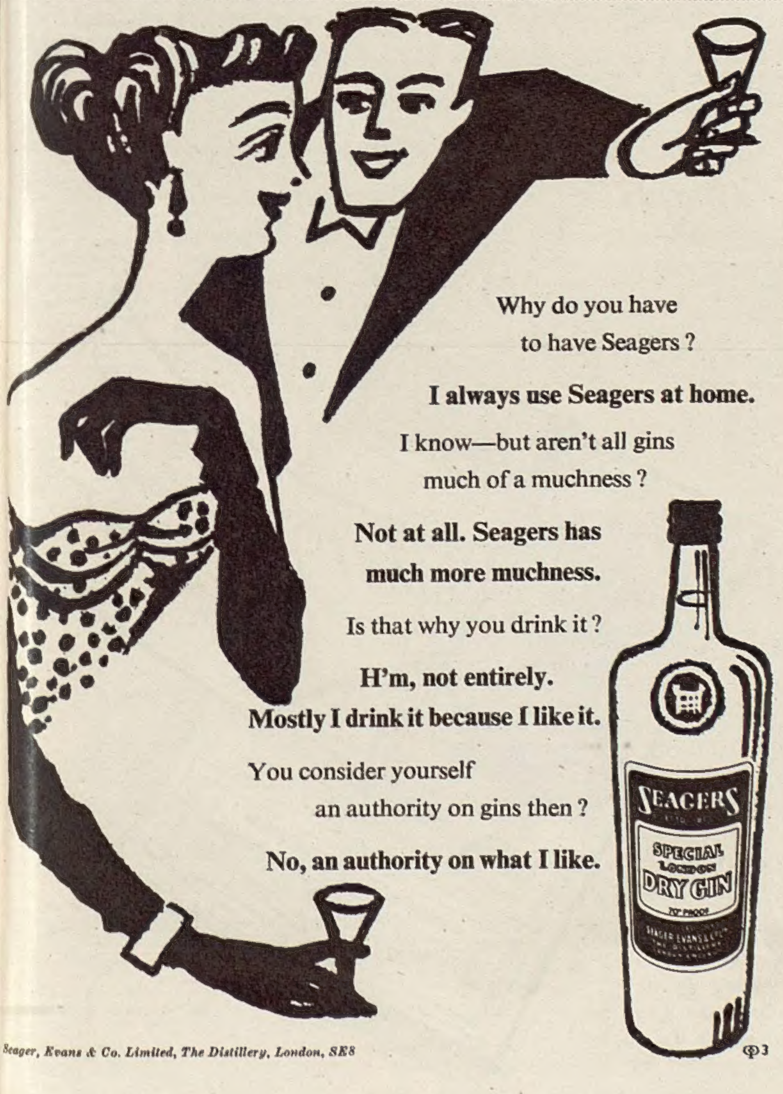
The House of STATE EXPRESS. 210 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1.



Why do you have to have Seagers?

I always use Seagers at home.

I know—but aren't all gins much of a muchness?

Not at all. Seagers has much more muchness.

Is that why you drink it?

H'm, not entirely. Mostly I drink it because I like it.

You consider yourself an authority on gins then?

No, an authority on what I like.

Seager, Evans & Co. Limited, The Distillery, London, SE8 ⓟ3

DRESS REHEARSAL

" It is all very well for Mrs. Cartwheel to hold the Children's Party here — but frankly, Hawkins, I never bargained for white whiskers . . . "

" *Cartwright is the name, sir. Only yesterday she said, ' I count on Mr. Gerald to wear the full regalia! '* "

" Do you not feel, Hawkins, that a man of your build, — with your benign expression, paternal manner and mellow voice . . . ?"

" *I shall be fully occupied with the refreshments, sir. Three cases of Rose's Lime Juice arrived this morning.*"

"Pour me a large gin and Rose's now! I shall then face the future with reckless confidence, filling the young with innocent joy and promising Mrs. C. a repeat performance next year."

ROSE'S—*for Gin and Lime*

ROSE'S ALSO MAKE FINE FRUIT SQUASHES

Drambuie

Out of the past comes the legend of DRAMBUIE, the liqueur that Bonnie Prince Charlie brought to Scotland during his romantic attempt to secure the throne. It is now a prime favourite throughout the world.

THE DRAMBUIE LIQUEUR CO. LTD. EDINBURGH SCOTLAND

Où est le Dubonnet de
WHERE IS THE DUBONNET OF
mon père? Dans un paquet
MY FATHER? IN A PARCEL
étiqueté "Ne pas défaire
LABELLED "NOT TO BE OPENED
avant Noël." Soyez calme,
TILL CHRISTMAS." KEEP CALM,
mon père! Le marchand de
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